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THE SPHERE

Vol. CLXVIII No. 2194 — WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED THE GRAPHIC — FEBRUARY 7 1942

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THE SPHERE
With which is incorporated "THE GRAPHIC"
The Empire's Illustrated Weekly
London, February 7, 1942

ONE OF THE HAZARDS OF WARFARE IN THE LIBYAN DESERT: SOUTH AFRICAN SAPPERS GATHERING UP GERMAN ANTI-TANK MINES, WHICH THE ENEMY HAD SOWN IN THE DESERT SANDS TO DELAY THE PROGRESS OF OUR ARMOURED FORCES

Each area of conflict in the present war seems to bring its own type of warfare. In the Western Desert, where the ebb and flow of battle seems to be continuous, the Germans and Italians have concentrated on ways and means of preventing our armoured forces from pressing too closely on their heels. The land minefield has been perfected in this theatre to a marked degree : our own fields helped to preserve the garrison at Tobruk ; and now the German minefields seem to have given the enemy much-needed respites at certain critical stages when delaying measures were necessary for them. It is to the Sappers that the task of clearing the enemy's minefields falls : in this picture, South African Engineers are seen concentrating the German "Tellers," or anti-tank mines, from a minefield sown by the enemy at Bardia : later, these mines will be destroyed by the Sappers

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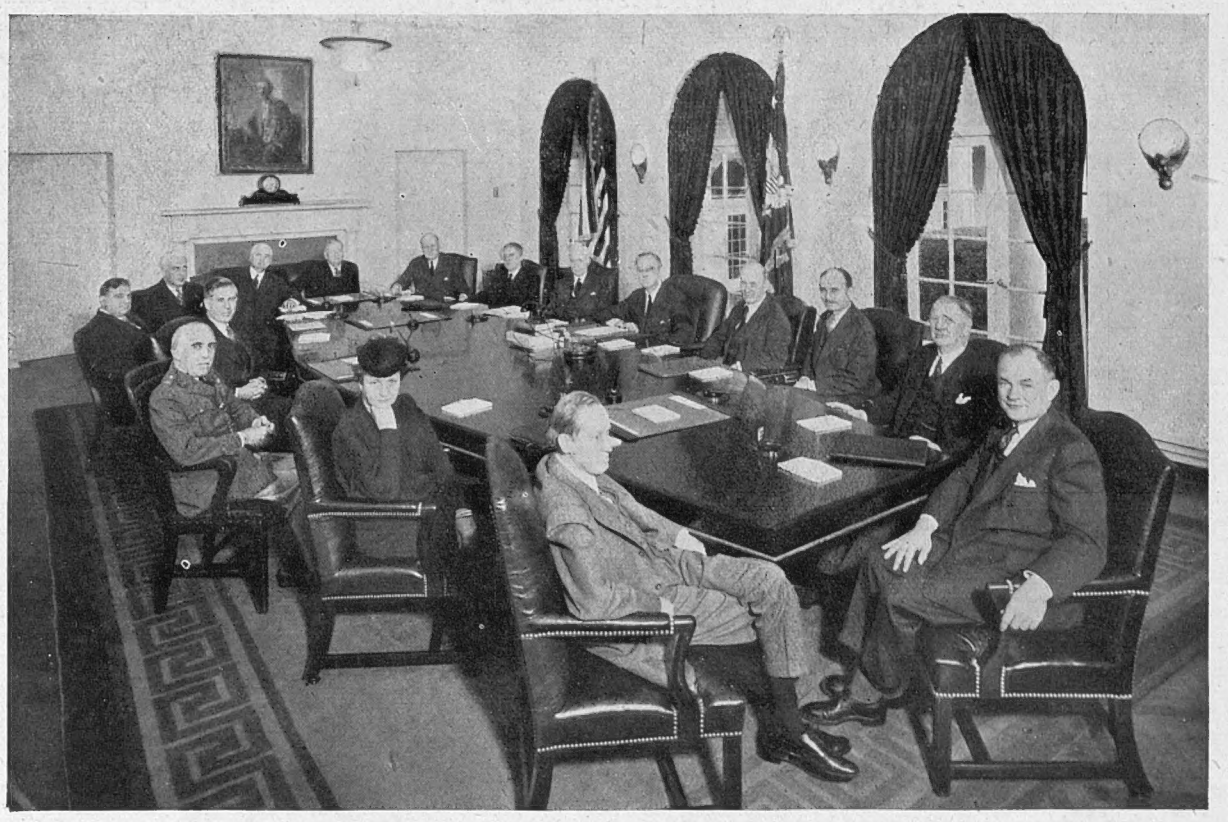
A WAR NEWSLETTER —No. 127

1, NEW OXFORD STREET, W.C.1.

A Vote and Note of Confidence.—The great debate which ended in a vote of confidence in Mr. Churchill—no, in Mr. Churchill's Government—is ancient history now. The critics of the Government were like March. They came in like a lion, and went out into the lobby like a lamb. Those who most truculently declared their intention to oppose the vote of confidence obediently swelled the majority against that popular man, Minority - Maxton's vote. Did they eat their words because the Premier "was brought to his knees" on the question of a Minister of Supply? The Premier's knees *never touched the floor* of the House. The victory was a foregone conclusion. It was not required in Britain or in Europe or America or elsewhere to re-establish our national unity and determination, etc., in the world's eyes. It was our Parliament enjoying a full-dress debate, letting off steam, having a jolly good dust-up, and then going home arm-in-arm. And surely we are the wonder of the world! Small wonder if Stalin raised his eyebrows, if Hitler bit his truncated moustache and told Ribbentrop that, after all, his estimate of Britain was not so utterly worthless. . . . The total war was in a critical stage. Singapore looked like a cinch for the Japs, Rommel was apparently back once more in Benghazi helping himself to our brand-new dumps of much-needed petrol, etc., and finding that method a much quicker, cheaper and surer means of supply. Russia was forging on, and doing, *pro tem.*, the lion's share of twisting the tiger's tail. In short, it was a time when Britain should have been right down to brass-tacks and looking to her laurels. And, instead, to achieve what needed no achieving—the confirmation of our unity and high resolve—we raised the curtain for the whole world on the recent nakedness of our land and revealed in a spot-light the still existing gaps. No doubt the Japs knew well that we had 60,000 men equipped to defend Singapore; no doubt Rommel had an idea that Auchinleck asked for five months to prepare to sweep him out of Libya; no doubt the circumstances which led to Admiral Phillips' splendid fiasco were pretty well guessed by now. But was it a time to advertise our mistakes and misfortunes, and to put the seal of authority on enemy-guessed figures and statistics? I cannot think it. I cannot comprehend our parliamentary institutions in total war. I called the debate "unreal." I wish it had had no basis in reality.

Sixty-five.—It 's a great age? Or it isn't. Once, no doubt, it was advanced senility, save in very rare cases. For our ancestors of the early nineteenth century ate and drank and diced and dosed themselves to death before fifty. But to-day, healthy, temperate men of sixty-five, more often than not, are active in the open air and at the peak of their mental ability, ripe in experience, calm in decision, rich in character and moral courage. In their own neighbourhood they have become very often natural leaders, if they have succeeded in their own careers and walks of life. Younger men will follow them and trust them. Such of those elders whose circumstances marked them out to start the organisation of the Home Guard fell into the lead naturally and inevitably. They had the war experience, the time, the education and (what was necessary at first) the *means* to get something done as a beginning. And they had no personal axe to grind. Time passed, and the "over-sixties" gave place to younger men as section and platoon commanders, and became company and battalion commanders. And still they remained key-men. For in a military force lacking any sanctions, the one thing which held the units together was the spirit of patriotism, keenness and comradeship engendered by such old key-men, who were acknowledged to be "above village party politics," and to be wholly free from partiality and favouritism. None who knows anything of conditions in rural areas envisages a situation in which H.G. battalions would fight the invader *as battalions*, or, indeed, as companies. The onus of fighting leadership must fall on the section—or platoon—commanders (and probably on the former). The company and battalion commanders, whose commands may well cover a front of many miles, can only be roving post-offices, endeavouring to keep communications open, and to obtain information for higher formations behind the fighting line. In such circumstances, proven company and battalion commanders of sixty-five or so, if invaluable in training and organisation, will be still invaluable in war, since they will not be called on to lead forlorn hopes up the hills at the double. But the Army Council has decided they must go. And who are to take their places at this vital juncture, when "serious" training is apparently at long last coming to be recognised as very necessary? O me! If only the conditions ruling in rural areas had been studied and legislated for in these long, long months gone by, during which a garrison-town mentality has directed or misdirected the training of the force without distinction between industrial and rural areas.



PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT WITH THE MEN WHO COMPRISE HIS WAR CABINET IN WASHINGTON

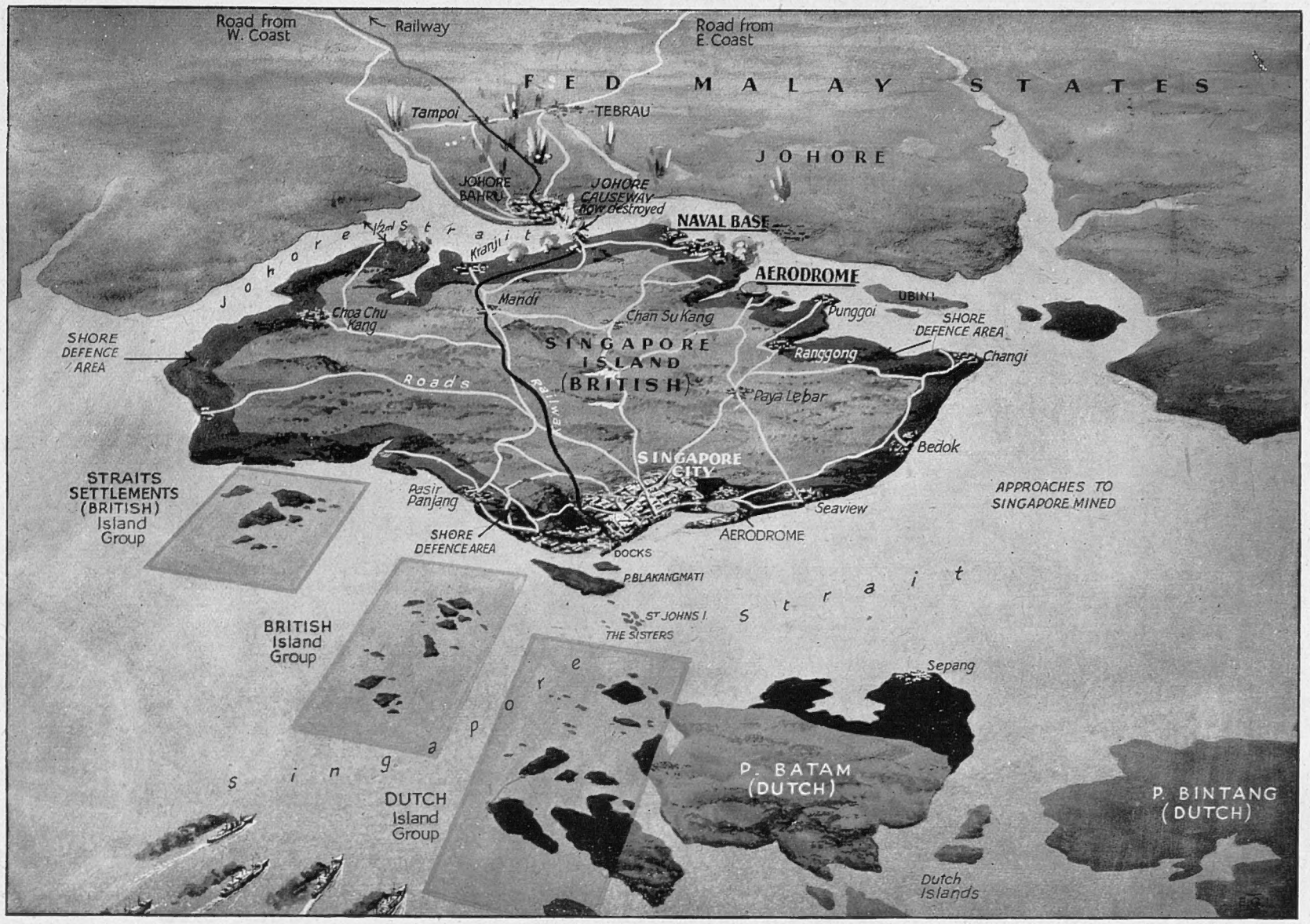
This picture was taken in the White House, when the President presided at a meeting of the men who are conducting the war against Japan, Germany and Italy. From left to right around the table are the following—Mr. Harry Hopkins, Lend-Lease Administrator; Miss Frances Perkins, Secretary of Labour; Colonel Philip B. Fleming, Federal Works Administrator; Vice-President Henry A. Wallace; Mr. Fiorello La Guardia, Civilian Defence Administrator; Mr. Paul V. McNutt, Federal Security Administrator; Mr. Jesse Jones, Secretary of Commerce and Federal Loan Administrator; Mr. Harold Ickes, Secretary of Interior; Mr. Frank C. Walker, Postmaster-General; Mr. Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of War; Mr. Cordell Hull, Secretary of State; President F. D. Roosevelt; Mr. Henry Morgenthau, Secretary of the Treasury; Mr. Francis Biddle, Attorney-General; Colonel Frank Knox, Secretary of the Navy; and Mr. Claude R. Wickard, Secretary of Agriculture

King Edward VII.—When Lytton Strachey "sat down" to write his *Queen Victoria*, he can hardly have foreseen that his method of handling royal biography would create a precedent and a monopoly for decades, and that his brilliant torch would pass through scores of feebler hands, to be waved ineffectively in the half-light of "current literature." But, like most reactions, it went too far, and became a dangerous weapon in any but cool, skilled hands. It was high time to show that British monarchs were neither god-like nor omniscient, nor above criticism, but that reaction towards realism should have been arrested before the pendulum, agitated by unskilled hands, swung back to the opposite extreme and showed them to the world as sub-human figures whose every action and every expression of opinion called forth ironic laughter or acid titters, as those of gnomes, dwarfs, jesters or half-developed children. We have in the past generation of time learned a good deal about the appalling responsibilities and the endless labours and sacrifices demanded of a democratic monarch of the British Empire, and of his family, and it is very doubtful if any writer, who has not had an opportunity to observe them in their private lives, is justified in writing about them now. The first fruits of such an opportunity will certainly be the clearest proof that royal personages are essentially human, exactly like other men and women, and are usually equipped by nature and training with specially well-developed qualities of patience, courtesy, restraint, sense of duty and sense of humour, which are very necessary for the successful accomplishment of their heavy responsibilities and very arduous duties. Their abilities and their standard of education are no higher than yours or mine, and there is no reason to pretend that they are.

An Inadequate Biography.—The weapon of irony is justified for castigating folly and absurdity; but the folly must first be proved. The weapon of the scintillating epigram loses half its force if employed to point a mare's-nest or to ridicule a mere vulgar rumour which has no basis in fact. And another point. Because Queen Victoria was treated by her (later) contemporary biographers as an idol, above criticism, that is no reason why she and her descendants should now be written about without any of the deference and courtesy which convention demanded should be paid to them face to face. No subject of Queen Victoria would have spoken of her eldest daughter as "Vicky" to her face, or to her mother's face, and, accordingly, there is neither sense nor manners in adopting this easy familiarity in biography. These observations were forced from me after reading Dr. Gavin's cracked-up centenary biography of King Edward VII. I found an unequal biography, sometimes in doubtful taste. It contained several inaccuracies, and it perpetuated a legend concerning Queen Victoria's and the Prince Consort's characters which has been proved totally false and grossly misleading. Sidney Lee's long and elaborate biography of King Edward had its faults and was sometimes inaccurate, but in its dignity and seriousness of purpose it stands unchallenged by any later studies of this King, who has been peculiarly unfortunate in his interpreters by pen or brush. Strachey had elements of genius in him, and his method of royal biography succeeded in the hands of a pioneer and skilled craftsman. Guedalla is an historian, as well as a skilled pyrotechnician, and many people enjoy his fireworks and forgive his occasional damp squibs. But nobody can much longer excuse or condone the use of these private weapons by unskilled borrowers, if only for the reason that they create a picture of the Royal family as grossly unreal and misleading as was that which the idolatry of the later Victorian biographers limned and left to us.

A Calendar! A Calendar!—A recent frivolous reference to the vagaries of our seasons and climate (with a special reference to poultry) brought me some punishment and profit in readers' correspondence. I got a very sharp letter from an Editor in the Poultry Press who had apparently mislaid his manners and his sense of humour. On the other hand, I had a letter from Mr. C. G. Grey, whose articles on flying and aeroplanes (and, *a fortiori*, his books) are well known to a wider public than SPHERE readers, in which he set forth a theory to account for the age-old complaints which we make anent the contradiction of our weather saws by our weather facts. It is a pleasant theory, and I will quote him verbatim: "Will you present my compliments to the 'Old Stager' and tell him that he can get his topsy-turvy weather right if he will remember that the Gregorian Calendar came into operation in A.D. 1582. All our legends about a snowy Christmas, and 'February fill-dyke,' and 'March coming in like a lion and going out like a lamb,' and 'dancing round the Maypole on May Day,' and 'flaming Midsummer day in June' and anything else that there may be of that sort, came into being during that happy period between Henry VII and Elizabeth. ('March winds, April showers, bring forth May flowers' is another.) Then the Gregorian Calendar knocked eleven days out of the year and put everything wrong. If you put those eleven days back, you will find that March comes in like a lion on March 11 and goes out like a lamb on April 11. And you get your April showers on the 1st of May, but you can go and dance round the Maypole on May 11. And so forth and so on." And there you are! Take it or leave it.

THE OLD STAGER



BY THE WITHDRAWAL OF ALL THE BRITISH FORCES FROM THE MALAYAN PENINSULA, THE ISLAND OF SINGAPORE began to withstand its beleaguerment by the Japanese on January 30. Here are the strategic aspects of the present situation—*Drawing by E. G. Lambert*

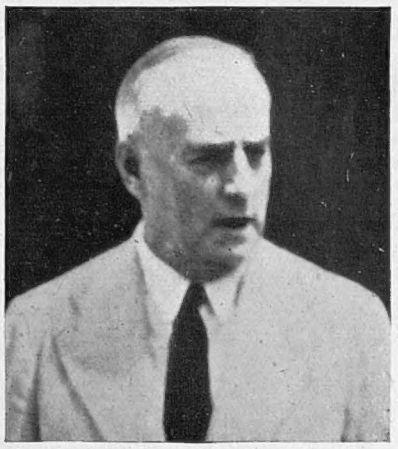
THE DEFENCE OF SINGAPORE ISLAND

Which Began on the Night of Friday, January 30, 1942

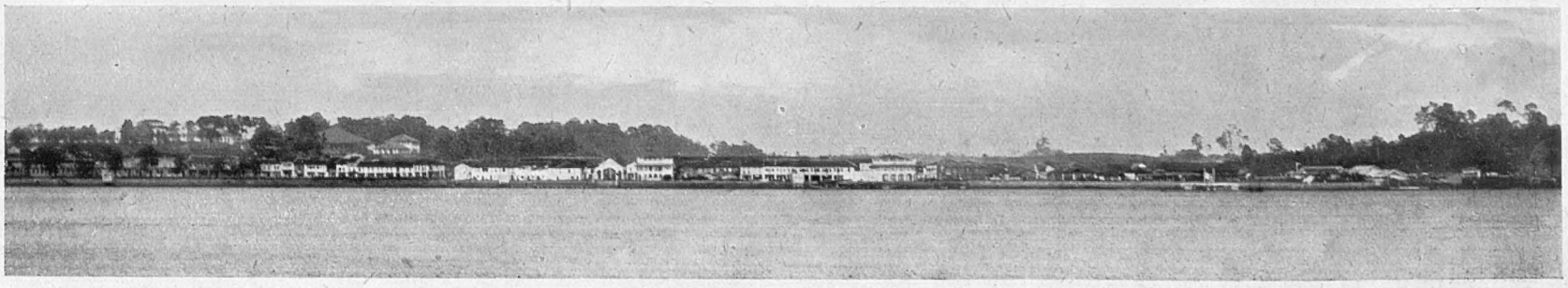
After fifty-five days of delaying actions fought through jungle, rubber plantations, rice fields, and swamps, British and Imperial forces retired across the Johore Strait, last week-end, the enemy making little effort to interfere with this operation. These actions gave time to the defence forces centred on the Island itself to take many necessary measures. At once the problem changed to fortress fighting. As the G.O.C. Malaya, Lieut.-General A. E. Percival, said: "To-day we stand beleaguered in our island fortress. Our task is to hold this fortress until help can come, as assuredly it will come. This we are determined to do." The problem before the commander can be gauged from the above drawing. The northern frontier facing Johore was evacuated by civilians some days ago and artillery fire was already reported to be harassing the Japanese troops gathering for the attack. The stone causeway was breached, but it could not be destroyed in its whole length. From Woodlands to the west there is a stretch of 14 miles; to the east, 21 miles of northern frontier, to be guarded against boat landings. Two main roads serve the western section; and five roads give access to points on the eastern section. All these roads fan outwards from Singapore city. The problem of sea defence is a complicated one. There are groups of islands standing in the way of attack from the west: two are British; one Dutch. These would afford cover for the defence forces. On the eastern side the Singapore approaches are wider, but all these waters are doubtless heavily mined. Guns on the appropriate islands would be able to hamper effectively any attempts from the open southern waters

LIEUT.-GENERAL A. E. PERCIVAL, in command of the British forces on the Island of Singapore

HOW THE JAPANESE WENT INTO ACTION IN MALAYA: This picture comes from the Australian front: it has been radioed from Melbourne to London. One Japanese tank (on left) has been badly smashed by Australian artillery fire



SIR SHENTON THOMAS, Governor and C.-in-C. of Straits Settlements, and High Commissioner for Malaya

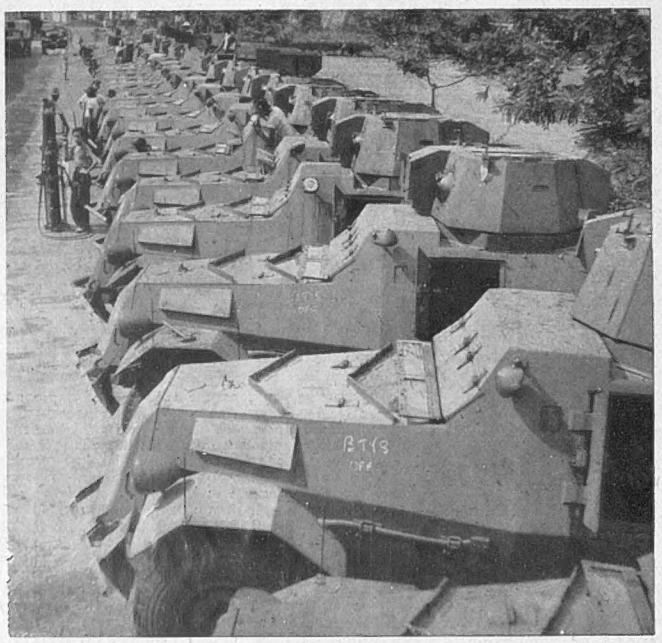


AT JOHORE BAHRU: The view across the Johore Strait from Woodlands on the Island of Singapore: The buildings seen here are now in Japanese hands, and this is the view the Island defenders now have of the mainland, which since last week-end was entirely in enemy hands

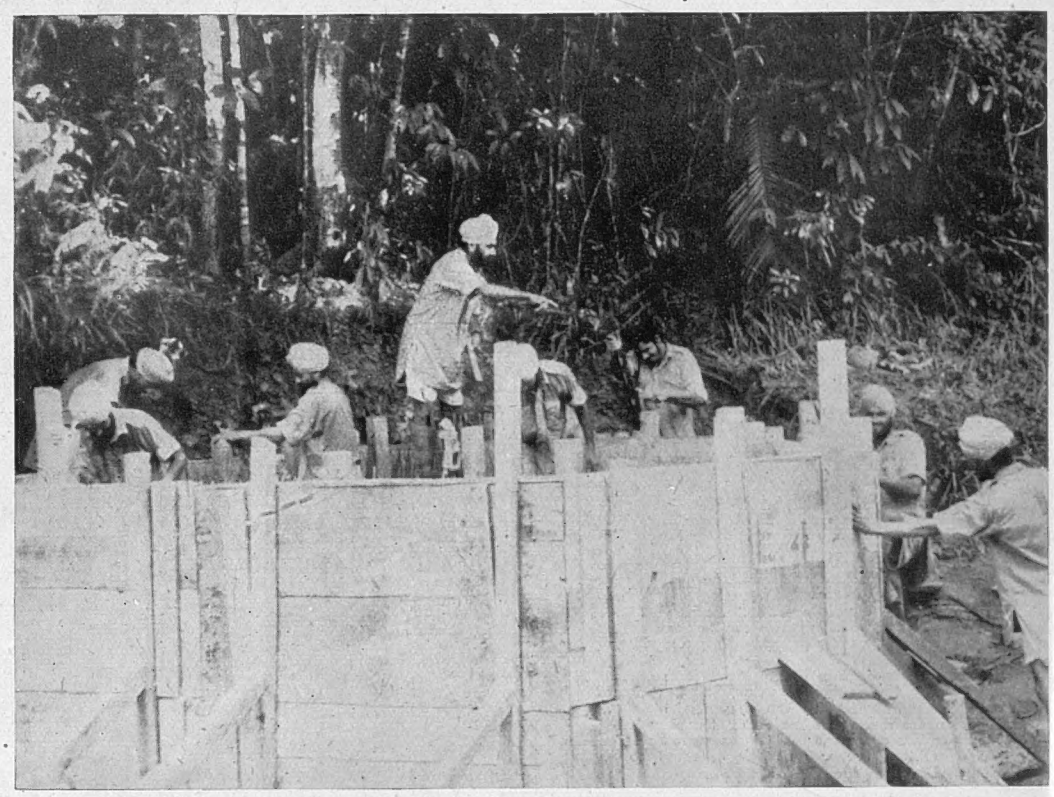
BACK to the SINGAPORE DEFENCES

INDIAN TROOPS OF THE BRITISH IMPERIAL FORCES, setting off in lorries to meet the Japanese. This picture was taken in the jungle when our forces were holding up the enemy's advance

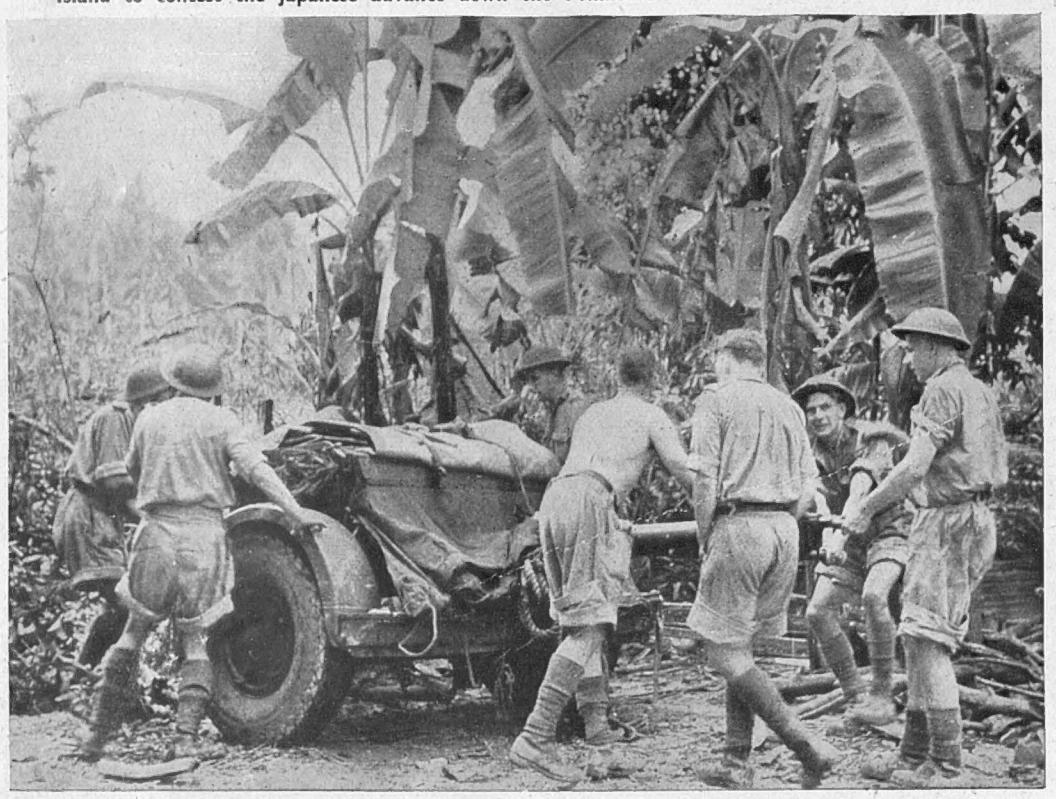
THE HEAVY FLOODS ON THE PENINSULA: A convoy of British 25-pounders negotiating a flooded section of road on their way to the front



A LINE OF ARMOURED CARS READY TO MOVE OFF: Ultimately, these vehicles were sent into the jungle north of Singapore Island to contest the Japanese advance down the Peninsula



WITH MUSHROOM-LIKE RAPIDITY, pillboxes like these sprouted up in the path of the invading Japanese. They were built by some of our splendid Indian soldiers on the Peninsula—but without very much avail!



BRITISH FORCES MANŒUVRING AN ARTILLERY PIECE INTO POSITION AMONGST THE BANANA-TREES: A picture which gives a graphic idea of the type of country through which the battle raged and which afforded such good cover to the agile Japs

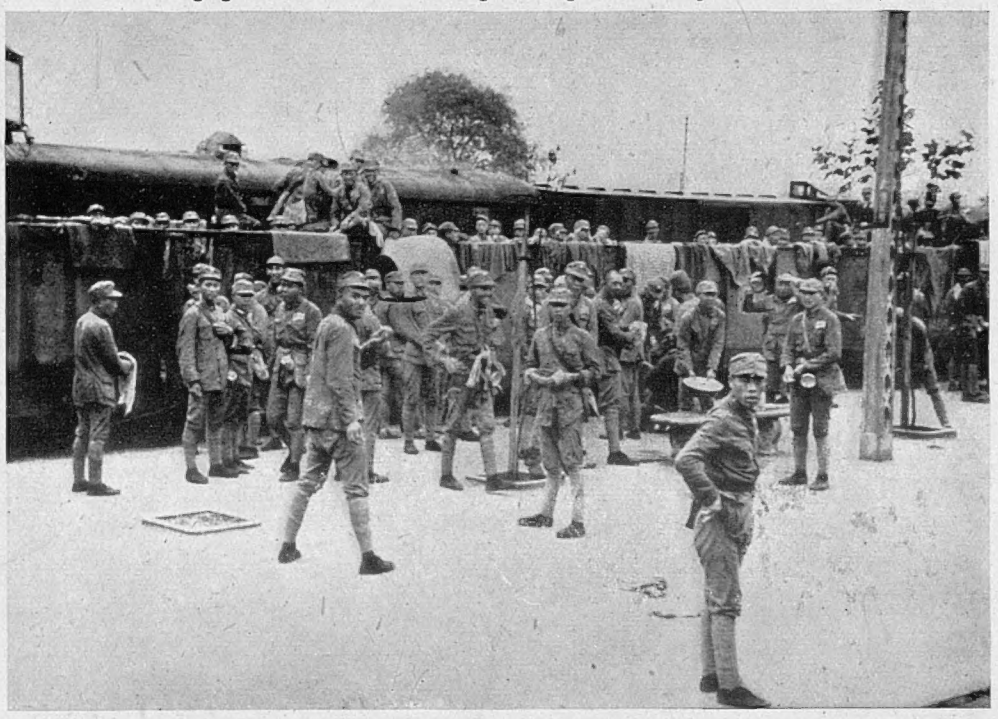
JAPAN FLOODS MALAYA WITH FAKE MONEY: Following their usual practice in the areas they invade, Japanese soldiers are now flooding Malaya with fake money, which they offer in return for the goods they plunder. The notes, which are issued in denominations of fifty cents, and one, five and ten dollars, are clumsy counterfeits which, of course, no shop or bank will take, except under compulsion. These notes bear no official signature, picture of the King or watermark, and in many cases they are without even a serial number

after HEAVY FIGHTING in the JUNGLE

ONE OF THE DIFFICULTIES WITH WHICH OUR TROOPS HAD TO CONTEND : A British motor vehicle negotiating a flooded section of the road up-country

THE "SCORCHED EARTH" POLICY IN MALAYA : One of the many rubber plantations razed to the ground by the British forces. Acres of these were brought down to prevent the agile Japs from dodging behind the trees during the night and to give better artillery range

SINGAPOREANS DIGGING DEFENCES IN THEIR CAPITAL : This measure, the curfew and the evacuation of the northern shore of the Island, were amongst the many preparatory steps taken to protect the Island



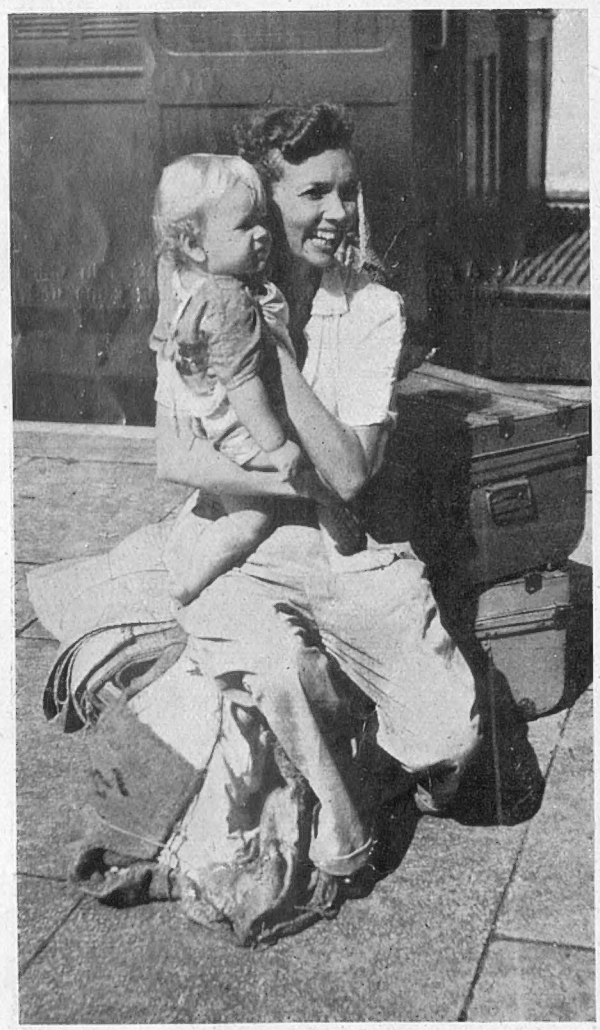
CHINESE SOLDIERS ON THEIR WAY TO MALAYA : A picture taken at a railway station in China, showing troops entraining for Malaya and Singapore. These troops on landing came under the control of Major-General Chen Kai-Min, representing General Chiang Kai-Shek

MALAYAN SOLDIERS who are now assisting in the defence of Singapore Island : They have been recruited from the Island's native population

MOBILE CANTEENS FOR AIR-RAID VICTIMS : Serving drinks from a mobile canteen, presented by a Singapore civilian to the Passive Defence Services for the benefit of workers and air-raid victims on the Island

THE WAR IN MALAYA: First Pictures of the Flight from Penang

FIRST PICTURES OF THE REFUGEES FROM PENANG: The scene at Ipoh Station, in Perak, as the British refugees arrived en route to Singapore. Local residents provided the newcomers with refreshments, before themselves being compelled to evacuate their homes before the advancing Japanese

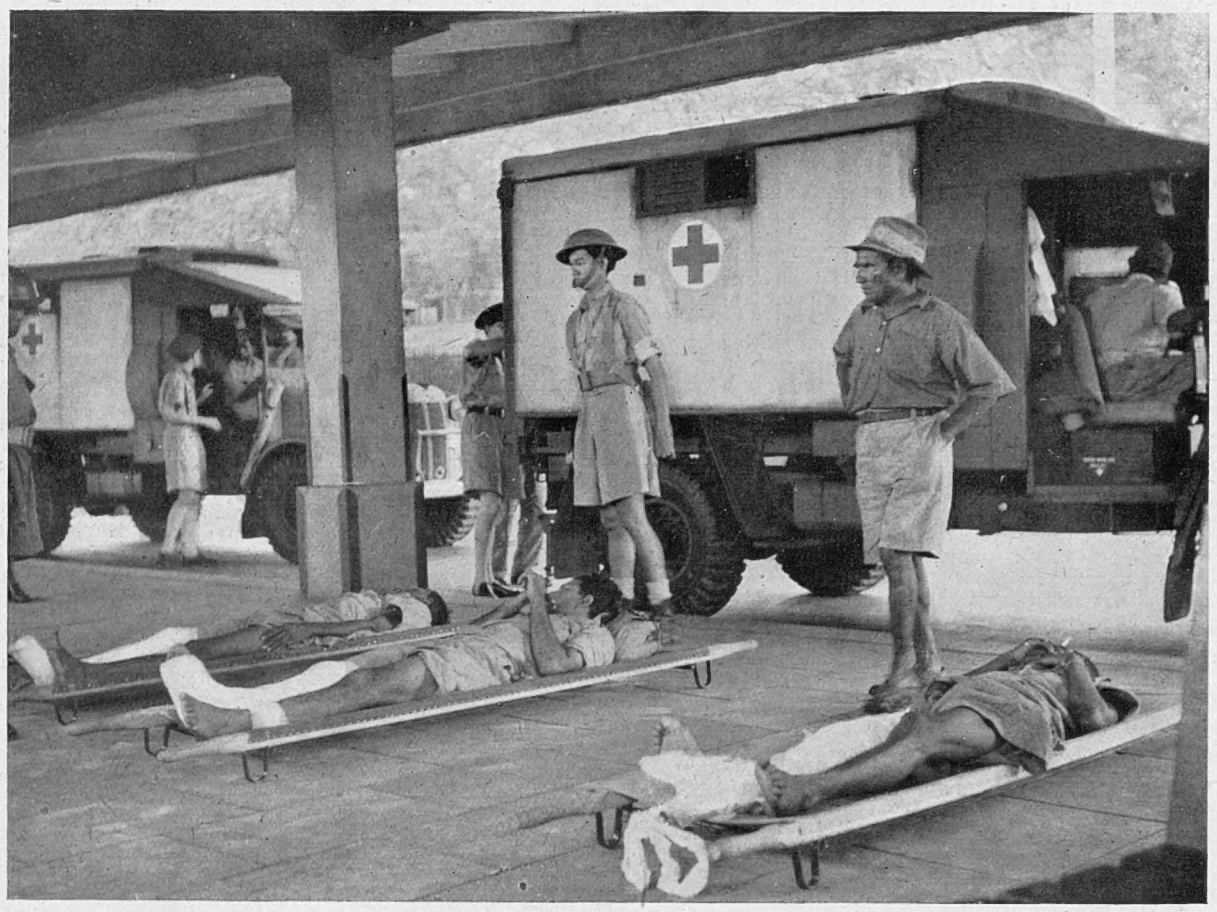


AT IPOH STATION: A British woman, en route for Singapore, with her baby and all her worldly possessions

BRITISH RESIDENTS FROM PENANG THRONG THE STATION AT IPOH: Only young girls and women are to be seen in this picture, as the menfolk stayed behind till the last possible moment before leaving

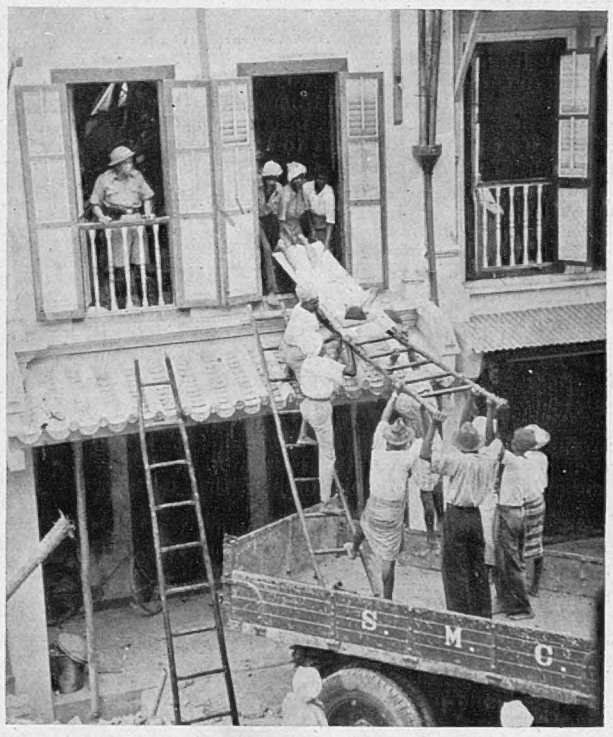
Malaya has witnessed some dark moments since the surprise declaration of war by the Japanese. When North Malaya was invaded and Penang threatened, the women and children were evacuated by way of Ipoh to Singapore, where a number of them were taken off to Australia and other places. Ipoh itself soon followed Penang, and was eventually occupied by the enemy. Singapore then itself became threatened, as more and still more Japanese forces were flung into the battle. The bombers have been raiding Singapore heavily and continuously, whilst the land armies crept ever closer, to invest the Island itself

This was one of the first Japanese to be taken prisoner in Malaya : He is seen being transported to hospital on arrival in Singapore

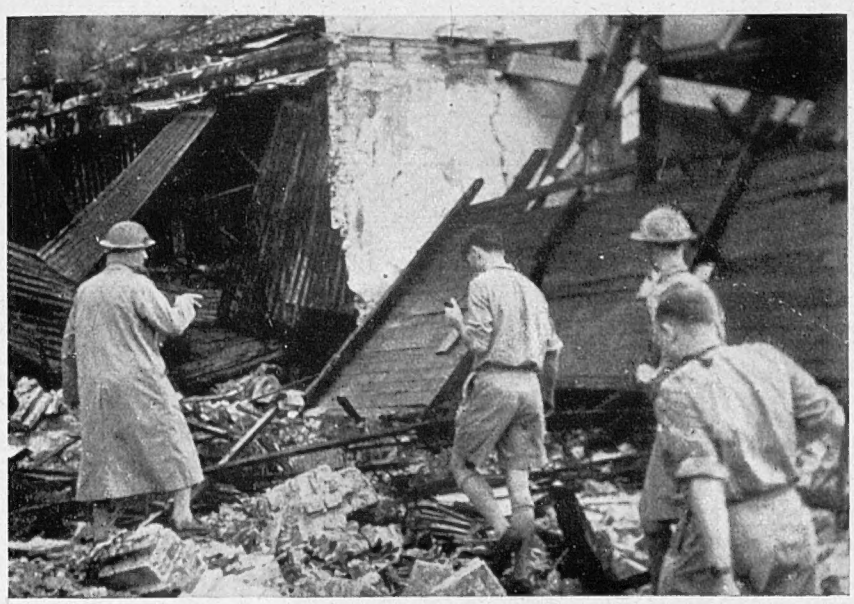


WOUNDED INDIAN SOLDIERS being transported from train to ambulances in Singapore. A picture taken as one of the first trains arrived with wounded British troops

A SQUARE IN SINGAPORE, where a Japanese bomb had sliced a piece out of a building, strewing wreckage all over the place. Malayan rescue and demolition workers are seen clearing up after the raid



A VICTIM OF THE JAPANESE BOMBERS being removed on an improvised stretcher from a wrecked building in Singapore



SEARCHING THE WRECKAGE OF BUILDINGS IN SINGAPORE damaged by Japanese bombs : The city has been heavily and continuously bombarded from the air during the past few days

MALAYA'S RESPONSE : Men being enlisted for service in the R.A.S.C., R.A.M.C., Labour Corps, and Malaya Regiment. A scene at a recruiting office in Singapore, where the response by the natives has been magnificent

THE FRENCH ADMIRALS ARE AT ODDS WITH THE LOWER DECK

The Navy under Vichy's Control is a Great Factor in the Mediterranean Situation: How it is Disposed; in What Strength; and the Numbers of its Personnel and Their Morale, are Here Discussed

By FERDINAND TUOHY

I THINK we make a mistake in mentioning jointly "the French Fleet and North African ports" whenever the prospect is discussed of Hitler making capital exactions of Vichy in the Mediterranean and on the Atlantic seaboard. His chances of securing use of the Fleet and of the ports are by no means equal. He may obtain use of the one while standing less and less chance of profiting by the other.

Darlan and his pro-Axis cliqué may be able to arrange for the stealthy use of this and that port as Hitler makes the request, but equally so they may find themselves up against a stone wall when they try to set the stage for even a partial serving of Hitler by the French Navy. There are signs that this division has recently become more definite.

It is hard to believe that the recent strengthening of Rommel was accomplished without the Axis having recourse to Tunisian latitudes. You recall March 1941 and the positive evidence of Axis convoys using the shelter of Tunis coastal waters with the most unhappy consequences for us later at Benghazi. I should need no less positive evidence to the contrary before renouncing the belief that in 1942 Darlan went one further by arranging for Axis use of the fine Tunis road and rail systems for the urgent and vital forwarding of supplies and equipment to Tripoli. The December meeting of Darlan and Ciano at Turin was never explained, and what more likely explanation of it than this?

Supplies could have been rushed across by night from Sicilian harbours to La Goulette, military port of Tunis city, and to Bizerta, each of which is kept roped off from civilian curiosity. Electric trains run roughly 300 miles south to Gabès, whence there is an excellent motor road the remaining 150 miles to Tripoli. A motor road, in fact, runs the whole way from Bizerta down to Tripoli, and it was used in December when the Rommel Mission in Tunis requisitioned so many food stocks that the French General Jacquet resigned.

The point is that there was nothing to stop Darlan agreeing to act surreptitiously as forwarding agent. Not only does the meeting with Ciano suggest it; no opposition was to be expected from the Vichy rulers of Tunis, most of them placed there by Darlan himself, from the Resident (Admiral Esteva) down. After Syria and Indo-China, why should Darlan hesitate at Tunis? Why should he hesitate again to-morrow should it come to Casablanca or to Dakar, the stepping-stone to each of which is Oran? In Marseilles sits a Nazi Afrika Amt which controls every blessed ship and cargo sailing for Oran. We should be foolish to imagine that Darlan is not also acquiescing in Oran being stealthily used as Nazi port of transit.

The ports, in fact, are one thing. The Fleet is another. One or two of the ports have almost certainly been used by Hitler. On the other hand, recent events have sent the French Fleet further from his grasp, and this despite the Japanese victories.

But, first of all, let us try and picture what this Fleet actually consists of to-day; where it is and in what condition. After all, not much is ever heard of it, and it has now lain low for nearly twenty months. Of course, the Admiralty has close information; all that is attempted here is the roughest outline.

When the crash came the French Navy numbered 180 units (not counting small craft and outmoded reserves) of 540,000 aggregate tonnage, the great proportion of which was in European waters. Losses during the first eight months had been relatively slight: a cruiser, several corvettes and auxiliaries, one or two submarines and seven destroyers at Dunkirk. The Fleet was a comparatively new weapon, having mostly been built since the mid-'twenties, and had it fallen to Hitler after Dunkirk it would have been a very severe menace. The exact losses suffered at Mers-el-Kébir have never been signalled, nor those at Dakar. In each case capital ships were mainly involved. In addition to losses suffered in these actions, portions of the French Fleet have to be written off in four other directions. A sizable force is interned at Alexandria (where, according to Darlan, Admiral Cunningham proved the only "gentleman"). Another section, chiefly of smaller units, crossed to British home ports. A third contingent is finally under American surveyance in the West Indies—this includes the cruiser *Émile-Bertin*, the only big aircraft-carrier *Béarn*, and the old training cruiser *Jeanne d'Arc*. Finally, there were a few ships on the China Station, of which the *Lamotte-Piquet* was taken over for repairs by the Japanese.

What this leaves under Vichy control, it would be rash indeed to venture. In Free French naval circles it is thought that Vichy may still have under it from 60 to 70 per cent. of the original Fleet, though in what valid condition is another matter. Whether the *Dunkerque* and *Richelieu* have been satisfactorily repaired; whether the *Jean-Bart* (sister-ship of the *Richelieu*) has been completed at Casablanca—these and other questions, such as losses kept secret in the last eighteen months and new construction in a like period, are beyond computation here. All that my French friends guess is that the main strength of the surviving Navy in Vichy hands probably lies in four categories: light cruisers, flotilla leaders, destroyers and submarines, particularly numbers two and four.

A number of the lighter vessels have been allowed out to do convoy work. Whether any others have been permitted to engage in what used to be called "practices," is another thing that only Intelligence can answer. Yet it means a lot, because warships forced to lie up continuously season after season are not going to gain in value and neither are their crews. By the terms of the Naval Armistice, the French Fleet was allotted in sections to certain ports where the ships were to remain under Axis observation and not to move without Axis permission. At the same time, munitions were controlled by the Germans and Italians, and Vichy assigned to each port and each command French admirals known for their Fascist sympathies. In this manner the surviving French Fleet came to be split up in the following ports, with most units at Toulon and progressively fewer at the remaining bases: Toulon, Mers-el-Kébir (Oran), Bizerta, Casablanca, Dakar, Marseilles, Séte, Algiers, La Nouvelle, Port Vendres. To-day the "big five" are said to be Toulon, Casablanca, Dakar, Oran, Bizerta.

On the face of things, this Navy would appear to be in a pretty emasculated state. Yet here again one has to go warily in view of repeated reports that Hitler has allowed French bases and warships means of defence in excess of Armistice limitations by way of an insurance against possible descents by the Allies. The exact position in these French bases is most carefully kept from the public, each waterfront being thickly protected and guarded.

If Darlan has the ships has he got the men willing to man them in the enterprises which may be exacted of him? Here the clouds lift and show more blue.

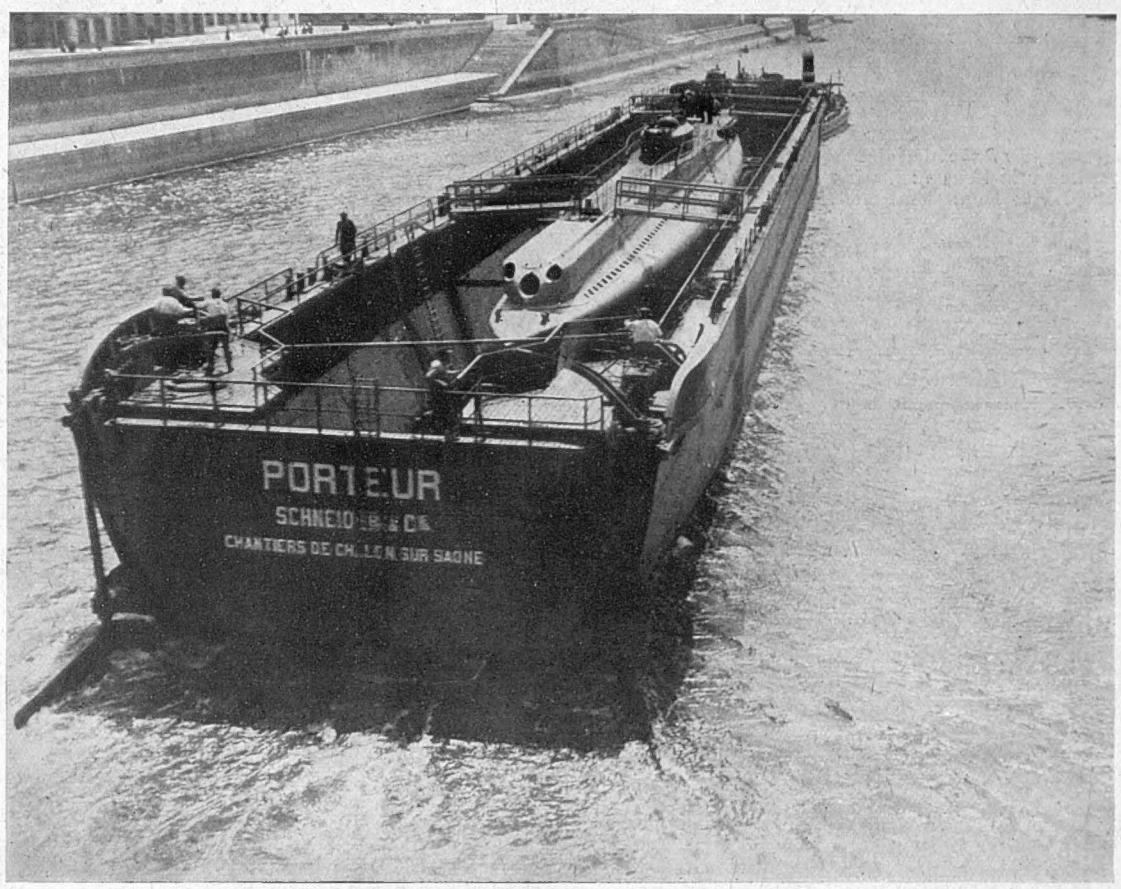
At the Armistice, total personnel was in the region of 4,500 officers and 75,000 others. It is certain that crews to-day are not at all the same as they were in 1940. If one-third of the Navy has lapsed, personnel should not number more than 3,000 officers and 50,000 ratings, but there has also been a great deal of shaking up within this personnel. Naval boards imbued with Fascism have been through the lot and the least "reliable" elements have been sorted out. In order to fill their places, Darlan persuaded Hitler to release practically all naval prisoners and many of these, together with young men recruited in France, were sent for training to specially constructed quarters at Séte. The numbers thus obtained were, however, small compared with the total required to man the Fleet, and in the result a large number of ratings the Admiral would have liked to sack had to be kept on.

This was several months ago, since when the respective outlooks on the upper and the lower deck of the French Fleet have assuredly not come closer together. First came the effect of the Russian recovery. French naval ratings have long been known for their quite "Left" views, and however much Darlan and his Fascist boards may have sought to purge, a solid leavening sympathetic to the U.S.S.R. must have escaped them.

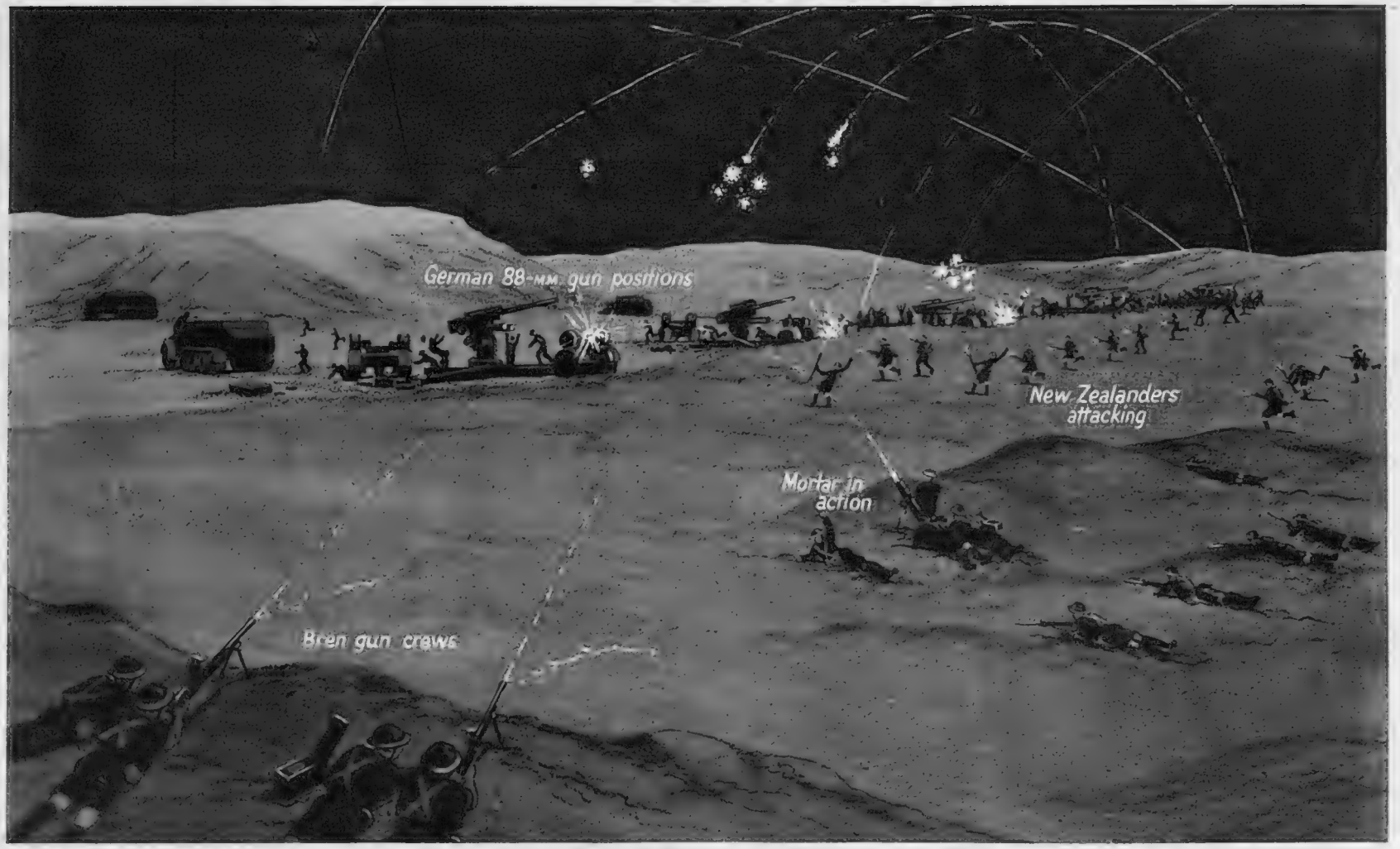
A more potent influence was exerted by United States participation in the war. The Vichy sailors feel that the Americans are far more "in" than last time, the position of the United States being more compromised and serious, and the Frenchmen are convinced that the Americans will in no circumstances admit defeat by the Germans. There is even something more in it than that. The Vichy sailors feel that with the Americans fighting they 've got someone to whom they can, as it were, stretch out, a thing they felt they would never be able to do in relation to the British, because of Oran. With the Americans it is different, though I shall not mention the ports where this sentiment has most shown itself.

To get this Fleet through the war at all costs, so that it may fortify French bargaining power, and meanwhile to humour the Nazis by giving facilities at bases and ports—such is the Admiral's policy, as perilous for France as for those who would liberate her. With luck, and if the United Nations play their cards properly, this policy will be less and less that of the French lower deck, which will want to strike for the freedom of France just as soon as the stage seems sufficiently set.

Meanwhile, the part of wisdom is to play the American Navy *vis-à-vis* the French Fleet, and to stay ourselves as much in the background as possible. The French Fleet in its present mood does not want us around, or the de Gaullists. (I am not referring, of course, to the upper deck which wants none of us.) But the Americans and in lesser degree the Russians are another story. Furthermore, it seems that many in the French Fleet would favour sabotage or mutiny if ordered (a) to fight alongside the Italian Navy; (b) to serve under German officers in the event of certain units being sold to Hitler as part of a fresh "collaboration" deal. The danger here is that the Nazis, with Darlan connivance, might stage a coup by which ships would be seized at their anchorages by trained personnel masquerading as technicians, agents, armistice commissioners, "tourists," and even as Foreign Legionaries in Mediterranean and North African ports. Unfortunately, there is no lack of such customers.



HOW THE FRENCH TRANSPORT THEIR SUBMARINES BY CANAL: This picture was taken before the war in France. Owing to the absolute network of canals which exist in that country, it is possible to transport smaller naval vessels from point to point without ever touching the open sea. Special vessels were in existence for this purpose, and one of them is shown here—the property of the great armaments firm of Schneider. Within the barge is the French submarine *Argonaute*, which was, on this occasion, being taken back to its Mediterranean base, by way of Lyon, from Châlon-sur-Sâone



ATTACKING GUNS BY NIGHT IN THE DESERT: A SURPRISE ASSAULT BY NEW ZEALAND INFANTRY. Gun crews must rest, and the most favourable time for attacking is at night. The New Zealanders showed great aptitude in this kind of warfare, using waves of infantry which advanced unseen until quite close, whereupon pandemonium was let loose, together with a firework display from our own star shells!

TWO VITAL LESSONS FROM LIBYA

Infantry for Attacks on Artillery; and Artillery Support for the Tanks

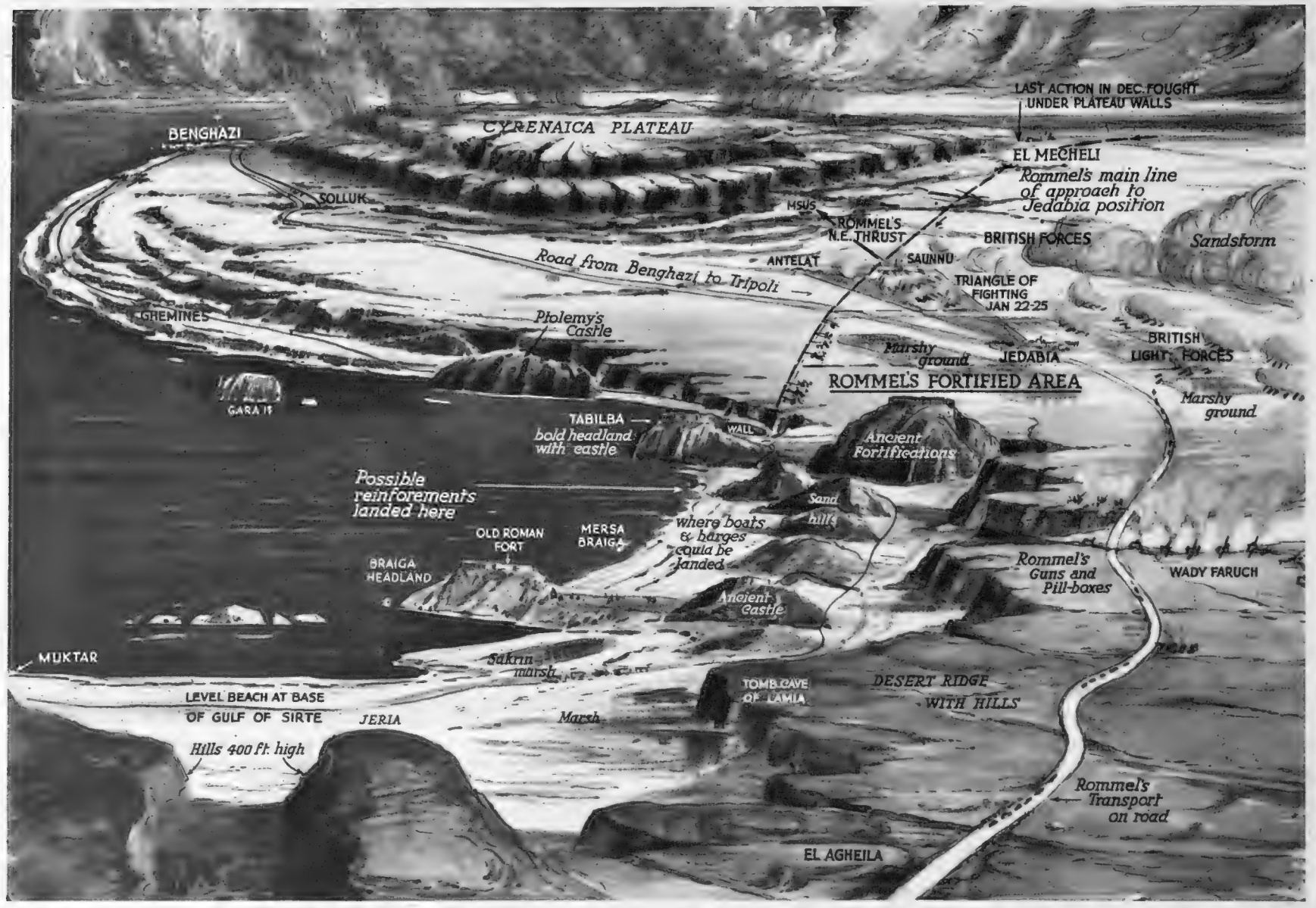
—Two drawings by L. Ashwell Wood

In discussing some of the lessons of the Libyan campaign, a special correspondent of *The Times*, writing from Cairo, had many illuminating comments to make. Two of the chief are illustrated by our artist here: The first shows the method evolved—under active service conditions—for attacking guns in position. It rapidly became an accepted axiom, states this well-informed correspondent, that it was useless to send in tanks against guns, with the result, for example, that the New Zealanders, in their advance on Tobruk from Capuzzo, adopted successfully the idea of attacking the enemy's batteries with infantry by night and silencing his guns, after which the tanks were able to consolidate and exploit their gains without difficulty by daylight.

The Germans, too, fully appreciated the value of field-guns working in close co-operation with tanks; their field-guns are extremely mobile, and their gunners have used them with great enterprise, bringing them into action on the heels of their tanks. The gun-wagons would be run right up to the edge of the area on which the armoured forces were engaged and would rake the British formations through open sights. Here the Eighth Army quickly learned its lesson. A series of British mobile columns, strongly gunned, was formed and was operating within a few days

HOW THE GERMANS SUPPORT THEIR TANKS BY GUNS: The enemy are very good at bringing up guns to support their tanks, thereby creating devastating fire-power. Sometimes these guns were brought right up to the edge of the battle area, and as their tanks advanced more guns were able to bear an enfilade fire on our tanks. The British mobile gun columns were formed to counteract this, and the 25-pounder guns used proved very deadly to the enemy

THE SECOND PHASE OF THE SECOND BATTLE OF LIBYA



THE FORTIFIED AREA AROUND EL AGHEILA WHERE GENERAL ROMMEL ENTRENCHED HIMSELF ON THE GULF OF SIRTE and where he was able to receive reinforcements from Italy for his subsequent break-out towards the Cyrenaican plateau : This area around Jedabia and Mersa Braiga was, centuries ago, a strong-point of the Romans—*Drawing by Percy Home*

When General Rommel fled to the sea-coast area, bounded by Jedabia on the north and El Agheila in the south, he chose a position of great natural strength. The desert in this region is cut up by deep gullies which, when defended by gun emplacements, can be converted into a very difficult terrain for an attacking force. The view given here is taken from the bottom of the Gulf of Sirte, with El Agheila on the right, where the road to Tripoli runs southward from Jedabia. The hill known as Jeria is lofty, and commands the country for miles around. The bare road is the only sign of modernity; and, naturally, this piece of country is exceptionally desolate. To the north is the headland of Mersa Braiga, where once was a landing-place on the beach for Roman galleys. Here Rommel may have been reinforced from Italy under cover of the bad weather, which was general throughout Libya. Between the shore dunes and the desert there is a clear space beyond which, at every point, the escarpment hills rise sharply to 400 or 600 ft. At Tabilba headland there is another castle with connecting fortifications: it was here and on the adjacent desert that Rommel's left rested. Away to the right he was guarded by flooded areas, through which our light forces could penetrate only with difficulty. It was from the Jedabia area that, on January 23-24, he made his thrust towards two small villages, and then pressed on to the region of Msus, under the southern slopes of the plateau, and a further phase in the Libyan campaign opened

THE BOMBING OF ROMMEL'S SUPPLY LINES ALONG THE GULF OF SIRTE : This view is taken looking towards Tripoli ; the R.A.F. machines are bombing Axis tankers and other vehicles, a task in which notable successes were scored by our Blenheims—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

The Extraordinary Adventures of General Rommel

THE record of General Rommel's movements since the day on which he determined to flee westwards from Marmarica throughout the whole length of Cyrenaica is so extraordinary that it becomes necessary to examine the adventures of his Forces in detail. By this means only can we gain some clear idea of what has been happening in the district to the south of the Cyrenaican plateau.

Let us go back to the beginning of the adventure. It dates from about December 10 last, when General Ritchie was congratulated on his victory by his Commander-in-Chief, General Auchinleck. We had been pressing the enemy very hard to the south of Gazala—the next important point west of Tobruk—and he appeared to have no choice left but to flee from his unpleasant position. This he did, moving by every road and track on a wide front towards the steeply rising eastern front of the Cyrenaican plateau. Italian forces took the coast road towards Derna, the bulk of the Germans being placed more to the south. But the enemy did not go without one last angry turn against his pursuing foe. Below the walls he hit out at the Buffs, Sikhs and Punjabis, the Indians doing excellently in the task of throwing back the German infantry who were largely used on this occasion.

The attack soon collapsed, and the general retreat was resumed with apparently even greater speed. Any and every type of vehicle had been seized by the Germans to get their Panzer men and materials away to the west.

Whither had the enemy flown? British light armoured vehicles were hot on his trail. We occupied Derna and El Mecheli on the same day, December 19. Pockets of local resistance were encountered, and numbers of Germans and Italians were captured and passed to the rear. But it was not until December 21 that it was learned that General Rommel had reached the coastal area to the south of Benghazi; and that he was not concerning himself with positions on the high ground. His general position was somewhere to the south of Solluk; and his exact location was soon defined as an area around Jedabia, extending southwards in a few days to near El Agheila.

The enemy had not got off scot-free during this retreat—the R.A.F. had bombed his columns effectively whenever the particularly vile weather enabled them to find their targets. By the 26th, a northern British column had overcome some Italian forces and had occupied the battered port of Benghazi. But the

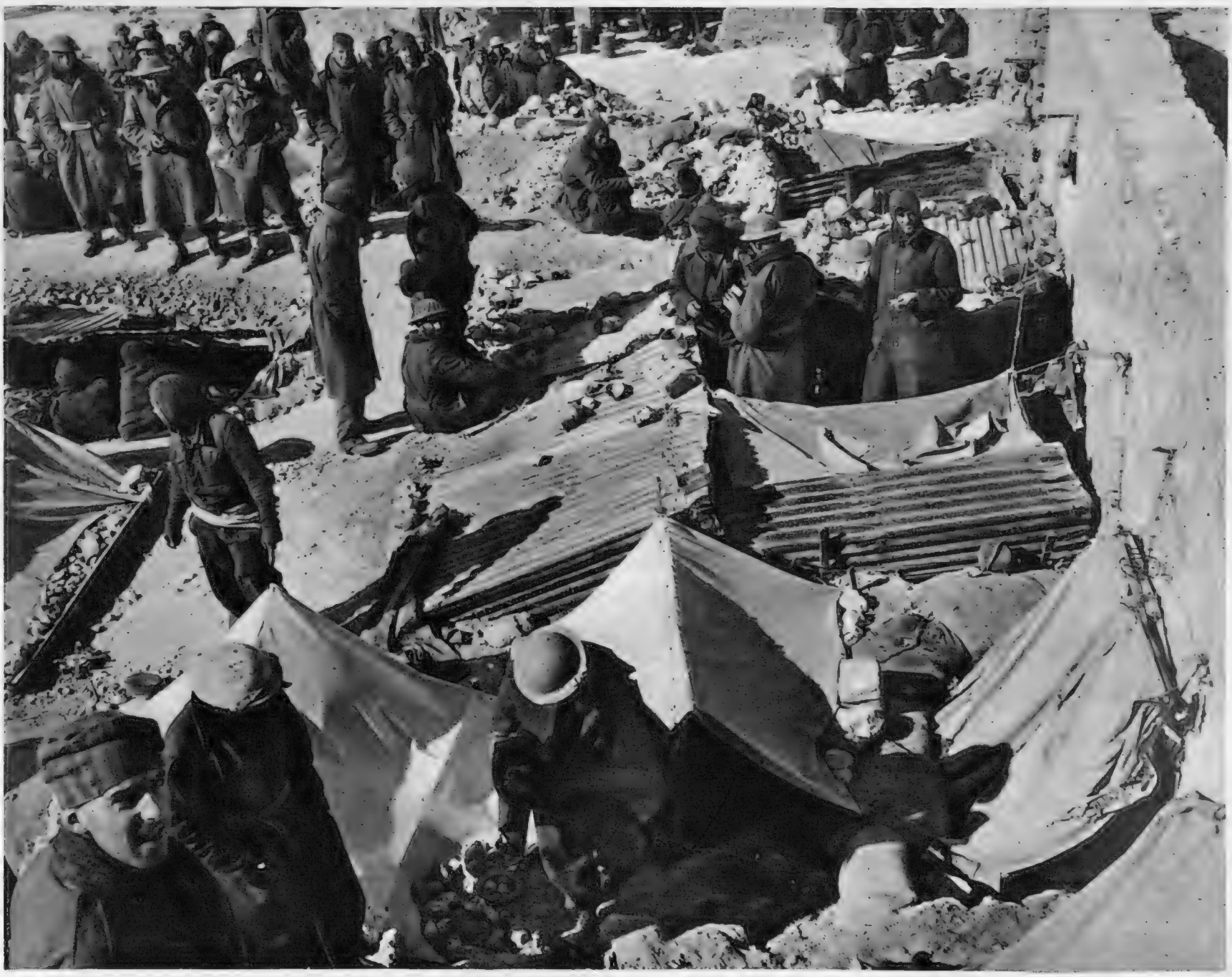
main adventure was taking place on the seaward edge of the desert below. Here, south of Jedabia, Rommel was consolidating a strong position among the gullies which run down to the coast dunes. On the edge of the big Wady Ferugh he had placed guns and pill-boxes, while on his right and left flanks further north the ceaseless rains had formed marshes which impeded the close approach of our armoured terriers.

Days, weeks passed. We scored a success by destroying thirty-seven enemy planes on a landing-ground at Jedabia, and actually held that small town for a few days. It was observed that the enemy's position ran down to the seashore, to the boat landing-beach at Mersa Braiga—a position among some rocky headlands and hills crowned with old Roman forts. Sandstorms frequently veiled the entire area from sight, and the enemy may have received reinforcements both at this spot and from Tripoli.

It will be noted that the enemy held this position from about December 22 to January 23, with outpost brushes with our forces alone to disturb him on the ground. What was he doing all the time? Was he feverishly patching up every tank and armoured car he possessed into some sort of condition which would enable it to take part in a forward thrust against our light "containing" force? It would seem to be so; for on January 23 he launched a movement to the north-east which spread outward for a distance of 30 miles; this was later rapidly increased to 50 and 70 miles. On the 25th he had reached the region of Msus, under the plateau high ground.

The third phase of the Rommel adventure appeared to be a very daring and, perhaps, temerarious bid for success. It enabled him to capture some of the supply dumps we had accumulated in the desert to supply our own light forces, and perhaps for the use of our heavier vehicles when their thorough overhaul had been completed. Rommel left behind him a position of great natural strength, which he had mined and pill-boxed in a manner which seemed to indicate that he expected a heavier attack than he experienced at any time during the month he spent in the old Roman strong-point.

A CONTRAST IN METHODS: THE BRITISH WAY OF TREATING PRISONERS OF WAR: These Italian soldiers were taken prisoner at the capture of Bardia. As soon as they were brought in, their wounds—even trifling ones—were dressed by South African medical officers. Contrast the treatment of these men with that meted out to our own men who were confined in Bardia by the Italians during our siege



HOW BRITISH PRISONERS WERE TREATED BY THE ITALIANS IN BARDIA: The prisoners-of-war encampment where British captives spent five weeks in holes in the ground

At Bardia there was a space of about one acre: here holes had been dug in the ground and roughly roofed over with sheets of corrugated iron and blankets—as seen in the picture above. Within this confined space, and within these appalling shelters, 1,150 British were confined. They were short of rations and blankets, medical attention was practically nil (beyond what was given by British Medical orderlies to their own comrades) and our men had been kept short of water as well. When Mr. Oliver Lyttelton and Mr. William Bullitt (President Roosevelt's envoy) inspected this spot, the former was quite outspoken in his condemnation and declared that he was horrified at the way the Italians had treated our prisoners. There was a tendency, he said, to think of the Italians as misguided gentlemen who normally mean well, but they certainly used our prisoners in Bardia in a shameful way which our men could not forget

THE AMERICANS IN ULSTER

AMERICAN OFFICERS ALREADY IN GREAT BRITAIN stretch across to greet the newcomers as the transport draws in to the quayside of the Northern Ireland port

MAJOR-GENERAL RUSSELL P. HARTLE, in command of the newly-arrived American forces (on right), with Major-General James E. Chaney (who commands the U.S. Army Forces in the British Isles)

THE YANKS ARE HERE AGAIN: The local inhabitants watch the Americans march by on their way to entrain for their camp

SIR ARCHIBALD SINCLAIR, Minister for Air, welcomes the Americans through the microphone on behalf of the British Government

AMERICAN TROOPS LINED UP ON THE QUAYSIDE: The man in the foreground is a staff sergeant, denoted by three stripes with a quarter-circle beneath

THE FIRST MAN TO LAND ON BRITISH SOIL: Private First-Class Milburn Henke, as he reached the bottom of the gangway

On Monday, January 26, the first American troops to land on British soil since the last war arrived at a port in Northern Ireland. The men number several thousands and belong to an Infantry Division—the first of a number of American Expeditionary Forces, as announced by Mr. Roosevelt. The pictures reproduced here were taken as our Allies landed from their transport on to Ulster soil

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FROM SINGAPORE and Other War Fronts

THREE INDOMITABLE INDIAN SOLDIERS IN MALAYA: Three Indians, dressed in civilian clothes, have been escorted to the Intelligence officer of a British unit in Malaya (on left). After interrogation, he discovered that they were Dogras serving in a Punjab regiment. They escaped capture by the Japanese at Alor Star and, after receiving clothes from friendly natives, they went on foot to Penang, where they were fired on; again they escaped, and decided to walk back to their regiment. Living on the country, they travelled 200 miles in seven days!

THE END OF A JAPANESE RAIDER IN THE JUNGLE: The tail of this aircraft, shot down by British anti-aircraft gunners in Malaya, shows the Red Arrow markings of the Japs. The aircraft received a direct hit, and the wreckage was scattered over a mountain-side, the body of the pilot being found half a mile away. A Malayan native soldier of the British forces, who was sent to search the wreckage, marks his approval in appropriate fashion

A DUTCH SUBMARINE SINKS A U-BOAT IN THE MEDITERRANEAN: On the night of November 28, 1941, a Netherlands submarine, co-operating with the Royal Navy, torpedoed and sank the German U-boat 95, commanded by Kapitan-Leutnant Gert Schreiber. The only survivors from the German vessel were four officers (including the Commander) and eight ratings. These were all picked up by the Dutch submarine and landed at a British port: they are now prisoners of war. In this picture Kapitan-Leutnant Schreiber is seen leaving the victorious Dutch submarine

THREE U-BOATS "KILLED" BY A CONVOY IN A FIVE-DAY BATTLE: This picture was taken during the recent five-day battle against U-boats and German long-range bombers, in which escort ships of an Atlantic Convoy sank at least three German U-boats and seriously damaged the aircraft. The picture (only just released by the authorities) was taken on board the destroyer which accounted for the first "kill" by gunfire: it shows the Captain of the U-boat on the British vessel after he had been rescued

ANOTHER PICTURE OF THE RED AIR FORCE'S PE2 BOMBER: The aircraft is being prepared for a raid on the enemy's positions in the Moscow area

THE PE2 BOMBER IN FLIGHT OVER RUSSIA: In last week's issue we published a picture of the new bomber being operated by the Russian Air Force. Here are two further pictures of this new aircraft in action in the Moscow area. Details of its actual performance are not yet available for publication

THE EXTREME NORTHERN TIP OF AUSTRALIA—Cape York, which looks across the Torres Strait to New Guinea, one hundred miles away. It lies at the head of Cape York Peninsula, which is regarded as the probable area of attack, should the Japanese attempt an invasion of the Australian Continent

THE APPROACHES TO AUSTRALIA

New Guinea, Now Threatened by the Japanese, as a "Stepping-Stone" to the Australian Continent By ROBERT FINCH

THE Equator to-day has more than its ordinary significance in the Western Pacific, for it is the line of division between the island outposts of the British Empire and Japan. North of it lie the Carolines, the Marshalls and the Marianas, which, in total disregard of the C-class mandate under which she held them, Japan has flooded with immigrants and officials, and prepared for war in the Pacific by constructing fortifications, radio stations, air bases and submarine bases directly across America's long line of communication between Pearl Harbour and Manila.

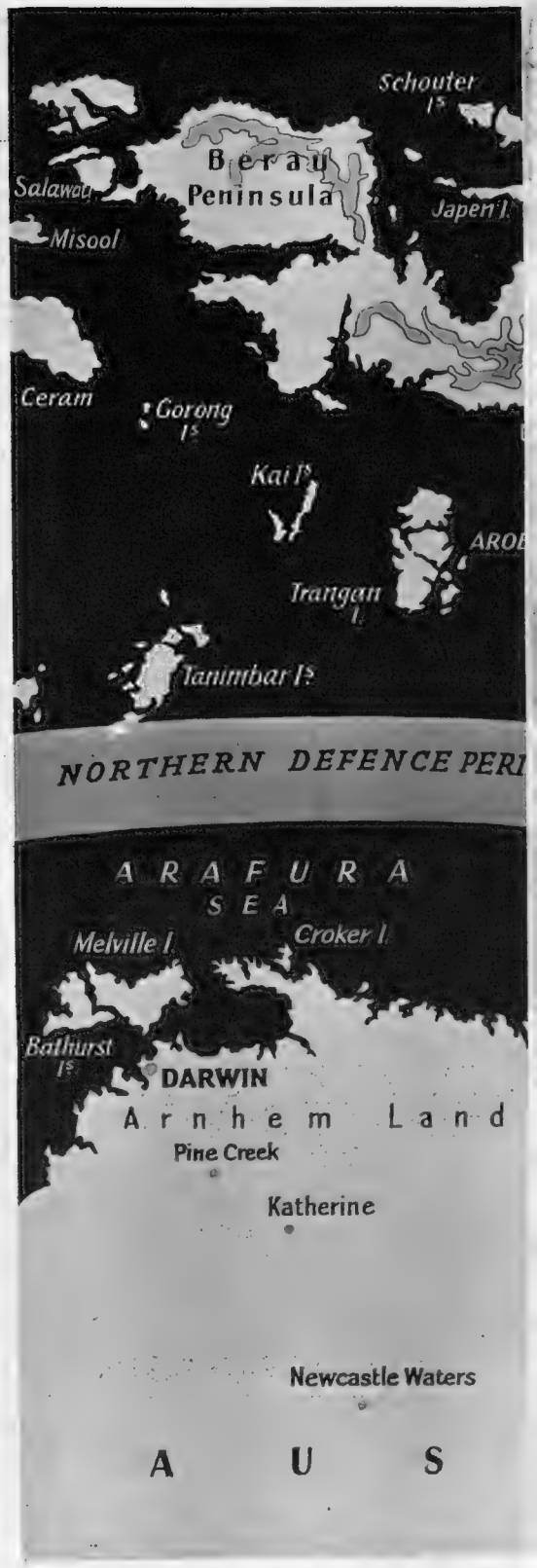
ONE OF THE "STEPPING-STONES" TO AUSTRALIA FROM NEW GUINEA—Thursday Island, the centre of the Australian pearling industry, which lies off the northern tip of Cape York Peninsula in the Torres Strait

Across the Equator to the south lie other islands, the largest of which is New Guinea, almost equally divided between the British Empire and the Dutch. To the east of it are the Bismarck Archipelago and the Solomon Islands, formerly German, but to-day included in the Australian Mandated Territory of New Guinea, commonly called North-East New Guinea. Over fifty years ago the Protectorate of British New Guinea (in the south-east) was proclaimed; in 1906 it was handed over to Australia and became the territory of Papua, with business and Government centred at Port Moresby, as it had been since the beginning of British control. Papua looks across the relatively narrow Torres Strait to the York Peninsula in the Commonwealth of Australia.

New Guinea may be the Japanese stepping-stone from the Carolines to Australia. What Tota Ishimaru, of the Imperial Japanese Navy, prophesied in his *Japan Must Fight Britain* some five or six years ago appears to be happening under our very eyes. Japan, taking advantage of Britain's difficulties elsewhere, is "moving in." Hong Kong and Sarawak have gone; Malaya has almost gone; Japanese landings have been made at strategic points in the Bismarcks and the Solomons, and attacks have been made on North-East New Guinea. Now Australia herself is threatened. A move from Rabaul, in New Britain, and from Kieta, in Bougainville, to the harbour of Salamaua (which in 1938 became the capital of the Mandated Territory after Rabaul had suffered badly from a volcanic eruption in 1937) would give Japan an airfield within two hours' bombing distance of the Australian mainland and a base for an overland advance of less than 200 miles against Port Moresby. An attack on Darwin from Amboina and Timor might perhaps be the other part of such a plan. It may be, however, that Japan is consistently following the policy of acquiring footholds for air bases or sea bases on as many islands as possible over a huge area. The Netherlands East Indies, perhaps, are the real object of all her moves, for they are a far richer prize than Australia to a marauder nation short of oil, metals, rubber and food supplies for a long war.

The mysterious island of New Guinea, third largest in the world after Australia and Greenland, is some 1,500 miles long and 400 miles wide. Many parts of its lofty interior have never yet been visited by white men. No definite population figures are available, for there must be hundreds of thousands of dark-brown primitive Melanesians living in the higher and healthier interior who have never been seen, much less enumerated, by Europeans.

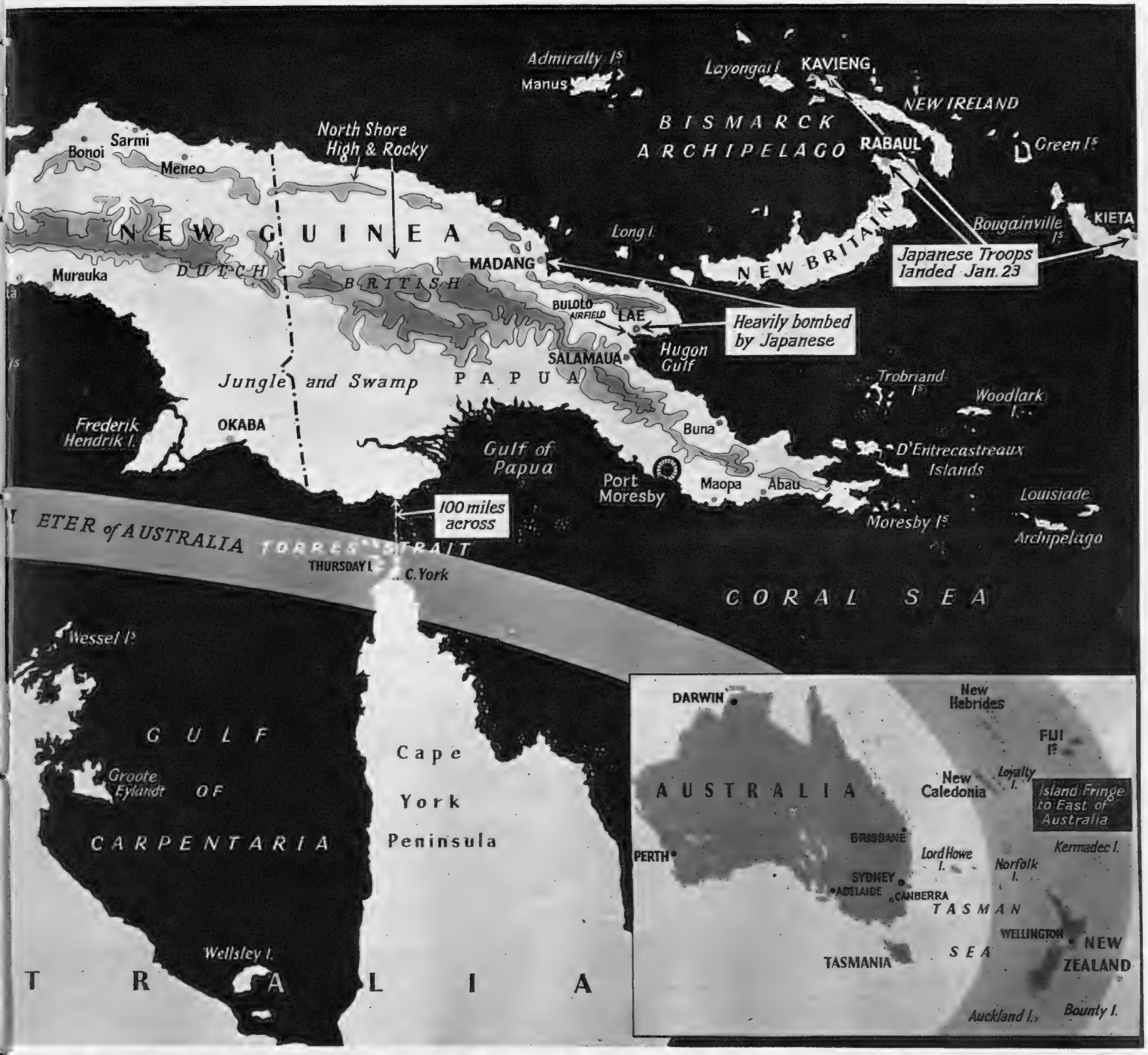
A high mountain backbone of confused limestone ranges crosses New Guinea from west to east, with several peaks overtopping 14,000 ft.—Carstenz Topper, in Dutch New Guinea, exceeds 16,000 ft. The backbone bears names varying with locality; its steep precipices, deep gorges, fast-flowing rivers and dense, Equatorial forests, tunnelled with gloomy paths between villages and hunting-grounds, make travel an ordeal. Communities of sturdy brown savages live in villages protected by bamboo palisades, or by plaited fences of living vegetation, or by their site at the brim of an unscalable precipice. They may prove friendly—or they may not. Human life is cheap among them, and fear or anger may prompt them to destroy what they do not understand.



AUSTRALIA AND ITS OUTPOSTS OF ISLANDS—BIG AND

These high villages of the interior are often at war with their neighbours; some are openly cannibalistic. In their small gardens they grow taro, sweet potatoes, bananas, sugar-cane, vegetables and tobacco; they rear pigs, whose flesh only men are permitted to eat; they prepare sago by primitive, but effective, methods from the wild sago palms that grow thickly in the swampy lowlands and deep river valleys. They wear little clothing, but much decoration—bushy beards, often rolled back and held in place by netting or cords; elaborate headdress adorned with cassowary plumes; forehead bands and chin-straps of "Job's tears" (Papuan beads, white and black or red and black, the seeds of shrubs); pierced ear-lobes to carry a bamboo tube of red dye for arrows; and a boar's tusk or a bit of bone thrust through the septum of the nose.

Natives of the coastal regions have long been in touch with white men, especially in Papua, where the policy has always been, not to exploit native labour and dominate the natives by force, as in former German New Guinea, but to lead them to peaceful and profitable development of their activities and mental capacity through education, paying due regard to Papuan customs and Papuan beliefs. In the Port Moresby region natives have made good carpenters, plumbers, craftsmen, electricians and road-makers—very different from their fathers, who never became more than carriers of loads or indifferent servants. The courage and enterprise of District Officers in the enforcement of law and order, their fearless administration of justice and the exploration of the interior on their long patrols have done more than is generally recognised in the development of this strange land.



SMALL : The Japanese attack in the South-West Pacific now seems to have swung towards the east, and a new area of assault appears to have developed in the New Guinea region, a "stepping-stone" towards the Australian Continent—*Special* Sphere *map*

After effecting landings in Borneo, the Japanese attack moved away to the east, in an area detached from the main Dutch defensive string of islands grouped to east and west of Java. It was this move by the Japanese which alarmed the Government of Australia, for the region attacked seemed to hold the possibility of a further advance to the mainland of Australia itself, distant only a hundred miles from Cape York. Points on the north-eastern area of British New Guinea were heavily bombed by the Japanese. Lae, Madang, Salamaua and Bulolo are all grouped around the rich goldfield reached by air from Bulolo. The actual landings took place at Rabaul, on the northern shore of New Britain, and at Kavaeng, on the northern tip of New Ireland. Some doubt as to a landing at Kieta subsequently transpired. On Monday, January 26, communication with Rabaul ceased, and the fate of the Australian defending force was for the time uncertain ; the army and military units were holding out on the hills ; they were mainly Victorian bushmen familiar with jungle work. Melbourne estimated that 10,000 Japs had been landed at Rabaul port. From the same source it was learnt that civilians had been evacuated from Madang. The occupation of the Bismarck Archipelago islands seemed to point to a further advance round the tip of New Guinea into the Coral Sea, where the northern Defence Perimeter of Australia itself would be entered. A string of islands extends southwards from the attacked district in a wide curve all down the eastern waters of Australasia

A KEY-POINT IN NEW GUINEA : The aerodrome in Bulolo

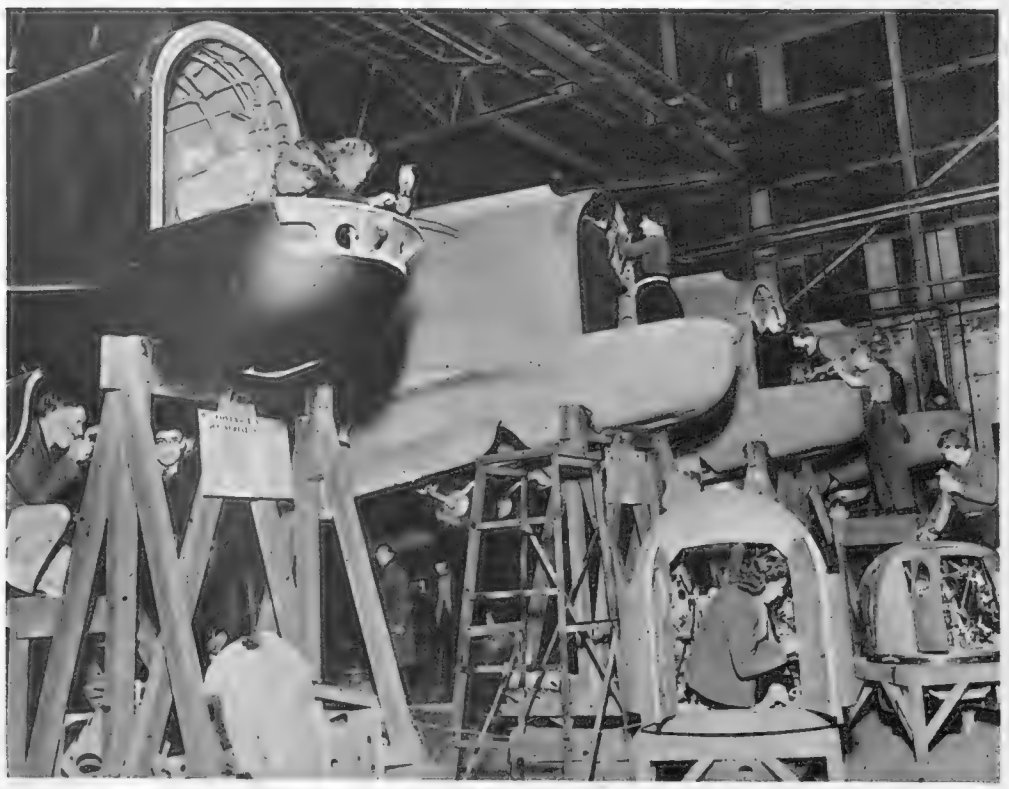
The port seen on the right is the "port of entry" for all goods going to the goldfields, where British effort is concentrated in New Guinea—Wau, Edie Creek, etc. It is built on a narrow, sandy strip, and during gales from the west it is threatened with extinction by the sea, which washes right across it. Bulolo Aerodrome (above) is the "land port" for all goods, machinery, etc., destined for the use of the large and important Bulolo Goldfield. The journey by plane from the coast port of Lae takes only about a quarter of an hour, whereas the usual time taken by the pioneers who did the same journey on foot took no less than eight and a half days!

AT SALAMAUA, one of the busiest ports on the south-east coast of the large island of New Guinea

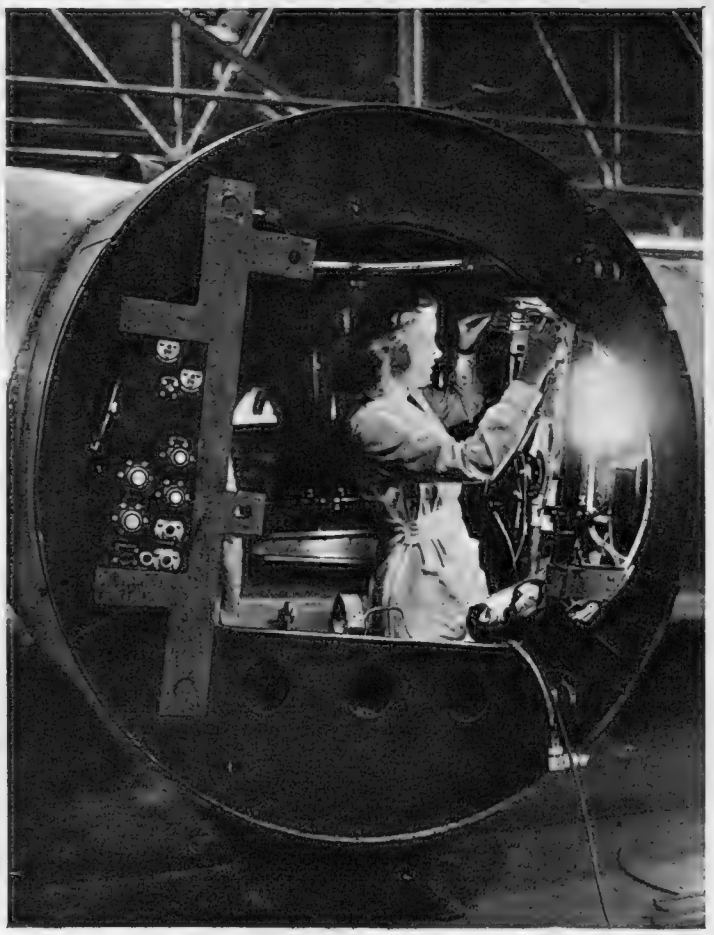
WOMEN IN THE AIRCRAFT FACTORIES Producing the New Stirling Bomber

GIANT AIRCRAFT IN A GIANT FACTORY: A wonderful vista of Stirling bombers under construction in one of the huge factories of the Ministry of Aircraft Production. On the left, stretching away into the dim distance, are the huge wings; whilst, behind, are the fuselages ready for assembling

Many details of the wonderful new Stirling bomber have just been revealed. This is the aircraft, it will be recalled, which has been figuring so largely of late in Air Ministry communiqués detailing our raids over Germany and Occupied France. The Stirling, as now being produced, is the heaviest aircraft in service in any part of the world. With its fully-loaded weight of over 30 tons, it can carry up to 8 tons of bombs—eight of those "beautiful" 2,000-pounders, each of which can rock a whole row of big buildings! With its four engines, it has a speed of approximately 300 m.p.h. and a range of over 2,000 miles. This aircraft was designed by Short Brothers, of Rochester, who also designed the big Sunderland flying-boat. The Stirling is now being produced in many factories of the Ministry of Aircraft Production, and (as our pictures will show) a great part of the work is being carried out by girls and women

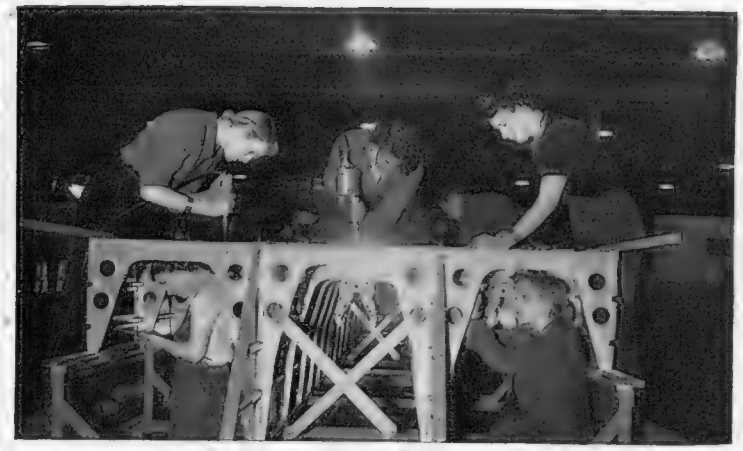


THE REAR GUN TURRETS, EACH WITH A COUPLE OF GIRLS HARD AT WORK: The rear wheels, it will be noted, have their own doors, which close behind them when retracted

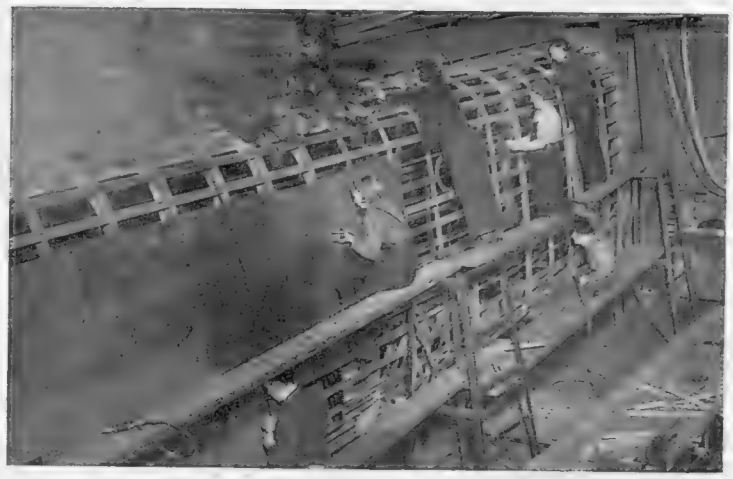


A GIRL FITTER AT WORK IN ONE OF THE ENGINE NACELLES: When her work here is finished, the engine will be installed—there are four of these powerful motors in each Stirling

INSIDE THE FUSELAGE OF THE HUGE BOMBER: Girls working with pneumatic tools on the mass of girdering which makes up the skeleton of a Stirling: beneath them is the compartment which can accommodate 8 tons of bombs



GIRL RIVETERS CONSTRUCTING THE BOMB FLOOR: Ten thousand rivets a day is what this team of women workers uses



AT WORK ON THE OUTSIDE SKIN OF THE FUSELAGE: Some idea of the size of the aircraft can be gained from this picture. Women work inside and outside the Stirling at the same moment

WOMEN WORKERS INSIDE THE COLOSSAL WING OF A STIRLING: These have to carry four powerful engines, as well as the self-sealing tanks which carry a terrific weight of petrol. No wonder the wings are deep enough almost to accommodate a motor-car!

MEMORIES OF FIFTY YEARS—

An Experiment in Autobiography

By J. G.

MY FATHER.—To return to the first years of my grandparents' married life. My father, their eldest child, was born in '46, and was educated at Harrow, and afterwards "finished" in Paris, living in the house of M. de Flahault (Napoleon's Secretary, and Tallyrand's son), who was connected by marriage with the family. His Paris days gave him a lifelong devotion to opera, and a lifelong hatred of the Empress Eugénie, as the evil genius of France.

He chose the Bar as his profession, after an initial failure to pass an examination for a Treasury clerkship. This trivial failure affected his career, and even his character, giving him a diffidence about his own abilities (which were considerable) of which we became conscious even in childhood. He secured a good practice at the Bar, and would undoubtedly have reached the Bench, for which he possessed every qualification. Several famous lawyers and judges were pupils in his chambers, and I think all of them highly respected his legal knowledge. He was for several years Recorder of Canterbury, and greatly enjoyed the work. But a severe illness made him anxious about his livelihood as a barrister, and he accepted an important post in the Civil Service which secured him pension rights, and removed all fears of loss of practice through illness. Always delicate and prone to illness, he lived vigorously into his ninety-fourth year.

His love of literature coloured his life. His tastes were wide, and he read in five languages, largely self-taught. He annotated his books trenchantly, and reread his favourites dozens of times. He was a lifelong student of Shakespeare. It is to him almost entirely that I owe my own devotion to books. He was a great reader-out-loud, and reading aloud was from childhood one of our chief recreations in winter. But if one of us showed the slightest sign of loss of interest, he shut the book, and the evening session was over. My father took good literature seriously.

His generation of the family possessed enormous mental vigour. They would throw themselves whole-heartedly into an argument; they were ruthless partisans of all which they stood for, and would admit of no compromise. My own generation did not inherit that mental vigour. I myself never thought a conversational argument worth much expenditure of energy, and must confess to more "philosophic doubt" on matters of all kinds than my father ever revealed. I fancy we disappointed him in the flabbiness or open-mindedness (or perhaps half-heartedness) of our outlook on vital questions.

But we had many subjects in common with him besides literature; cricket among them, though none of us ever became a star performer. We were all members of I.Z. (through nepotism rather than merit), and played a great deal of that most pleasant form of cricket. My father was as sound a critic of the game as he was of certain forms of literature, as quick to observe a fine shade in the technique of a batsman as he was to detect a weakness in a point of law. When he was over ninety, he still held court in his accustomed seat on the top of Lord's Pavilion. For all his delicacy, he was robustly courageous; he was rigidly upright, and possessed of the finest and most impartial sense of justice in any man I have known.

Of all his qualities, I think I was most conscious of his habit of facing facts. His children were inclined to turn away from them. He seemed to me to take almost a relish in accentuating the blackness of unpleasant facts. There was no euphemism in his labelling of disagreeable truths. He grew mellower with age. I realise now that I was more in sympathy with him, that he gained more understanding of the natural doubts and cynicism of my less happy generation, when he had passed his eightieth year. All my life I valued and sought his advice and his good opinion, and I enjoyed his company more and more as he grew older, no doubt because I grew older and more discerning. In material things, he had little resourcefulness.

He could not drive a nail into a piece of wood, nor mend the simplest breakage. He had not the hands of a craftsman, nor, indeed, of the least skilled worker. And if he had a clear fault in his character, it was perhaps a tendency to negative any plan or suggestion, merely because it was novel, or entailed action or change. I think this tendency was due rather to a natural pessimism or diffidence than to obstinacy or conservatism. Politically, he would have labelled himself a Liberal. In truth, he was a Whig of the old school, and shared all their enthusiasm for travelling across Europe. He put no *non possumus* to any plan for a visit to Italy or France. Always my memory recalls him sitting in his chair reading some oft-read classic; always I remember the vigour of his criticisms of men and books and political events, and his chaffing comments, sometimes unconsciously wounding to self-pride, upon our plans or mild achievements. I know that we recognised him, and my uncle and aunt, to be, in character and in moral resources, giants and portents when compared with our own generation.

Mothers and Sons.—No man who loved his mother can write frankly or fully about her. It is given to few sons to remember their mothers without some bitterness of regret for lost opportunities. For ideally the relationship between mother and son must be the most serene and comfortable of all human relationships. It sometimes seems to me that a large part of the tragedy of human existence had been spared us if it had been decreed that men and women should "speak the same language," that their minds and nerves should at least react in the same way to the same events, that their reasoning and their senses of honour and humour should be of a piece, and their standards of values uniform. As a generality it is not so. Of certain women, men say: "She has a man's mind, a man's point of view, a man's sense of humour"—implying qualities uncommon to her sex. And it may be that women find and value some uncommon types of men who can think and react as women do. (But I doubt this.)

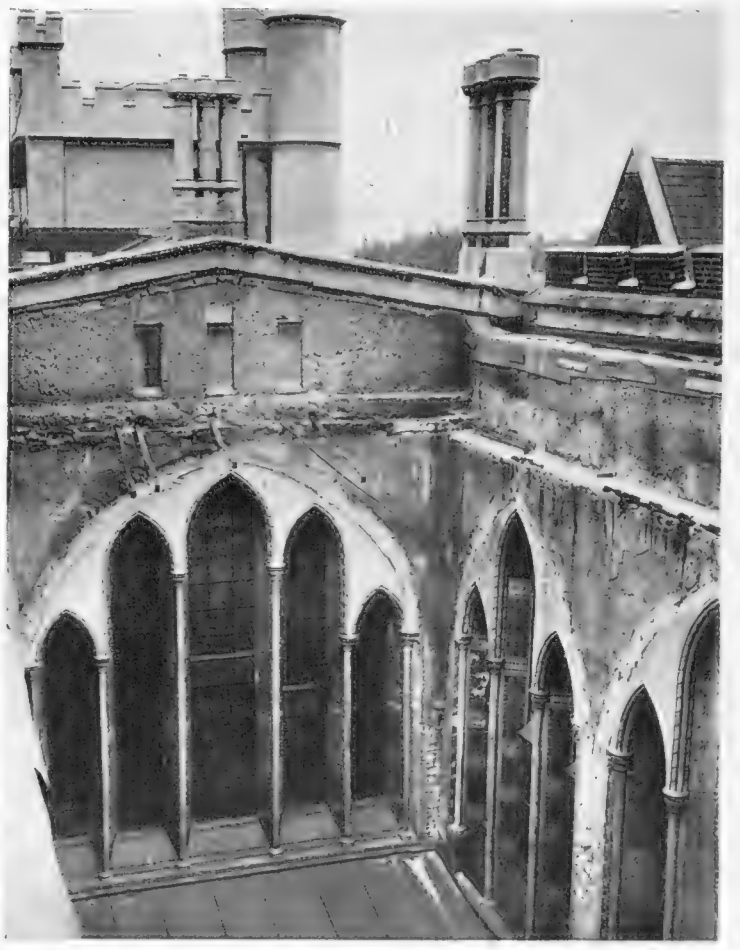
My mother has been dead these fifteen years (and I am, at least, thankful she was spared the last few of them). The years pass, and still the evidence comes in to me from her contemporaries and mine—evidence never needed to convince me—how sweet and loving a nature was hers. She was still a young girl when she married my father, a love match if ever there was one. She was the eldest of a family of seven daughters, brought up for the most part in a lonely part of the Highlands. Her father, a very gallant soldier, was well educated for a soldier of those days, and devoted to the Classics. It is related of him that one day, in kirk, the Minister referred to H.M.S. *Eurydice*, and that, outraged by the false quantity, the gallant General walked out in protest, but whether his family followed suit, I never heard. I fancy he walked alone for the most part. He had joined the 97th at the age of sixteen, and later in life commanded the 74th Highlanders, and for many years held the Scottish Command.

My mother had the soul of a poet, and all a poet's imagination. A vivid imagination can be a doubtful blessing. Hers was outstandingly *apprehensive*. She would for ever see ahead disasters and risks, casting shadows over the beauties of the day which her imagination could paint for herself and for her children in lovely colours; and diffidence and anxiety were her daily portion. Kind and loving as my father's family was, it was critical and rigid in its traditions, and there is no doubt she entered her new environment with a deficiency complex which never left her. All her life she was afraid of saying the wrong thing, of displaying ignorance, of showing her feelings beyond what was fitting. And all the time she had qualities which rarely adorn and sweeten human intercourse. I do not think we ever appreciated them as we should—none had a better chance to do so than I, her youngest child. I know that it was left for me, long years after her death, from bundles of her old letters and diary fragments, and from the evidence of her surviving friends, to gain a real understanding of the intense devotion of my parents to each other, of my mother's sense of humour of her poetic gifts, of her impulsive kindness and generosity and of her sympathy. What grounds are here for regret! Which was not to say we gained nothing from such blessings. All her life she held over us the banner of love, all her life she worked, planned, *fought* for us—and spoilt us. The regrets are for her—that her reward should have been so partial, and that our niggardly return should have been so often grudgingly given. I hope, God knows, that her sense of humour enabled her to laugh sometimes at public-school convention and University pomposity.

We loved her, and hurt her, and recognised the full measure of her love only when we lost her—and that, I think, is the history of most relationships between mothers and sons. I know that ours was a very happy childhood, full of laughter and sunshine, with the minimum of raw edges or bitter memories or icy winds

(The next article in this series will be published in the issue of February 21)

JURORS' GREAT HALL AS IT IS TO-DAY: The books which lined this Hall are covered with debris; some are charred, and some are spoiled by water. It is in this great chamber that the Lambeth Conference used to be held



LAMBETH PALACE DAMAGED BY BOMBS: The home of the new Archbishop of Canterbury is now almost a ruin: The real nature of the damage to Lambeth Palace, done during the blitz on London, has only just been revealed. The home of the Archbishops of Canterbury for 800 years, it was hit five times during the air raids; and now the great rambling building contains little more accommodation than a cottage. The Chapel is entirely ruined, and roofless (as above), and many historic treasures have perished. In April, when the new Archbishop takes over Lambeth Palace as his London home, he will find little more than a ruin for his occupation

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this publication should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export

FROM the FIGHTING FRONT in RUSSIA

A MINETHROWER CREW OF THE RED ARMY advancing to a new position at the front : Russians are at home in the deep snow; the cold affects them far less than it does their enemy

A RECONNOITRING PARTY OF RUSSIAN INFANTRYMEN, equipped with skis and rifles, camouflage cloaks, hoods and gloves

A GROUP OF DEJECTED PRISONERS ON THE MOSCOW FRONT : These German soldiers were taken by Soviet troops in a recaptured village at the distant approaches to the capital. Their hands were buried deep in their pockets because there was not a pair of gloves amongst the lot of them—a surprising state of affairs which demonstrates how certain the enemy were of victory on the Russian front before the coming of winter!

CAPTAIN NAIDENKO (in centre), giving orders to Soviet pilots flying American Tomahawk fighters with which part of the Red Air Force is now equipped

REGIMENTAL COMMISSAR VIKTOR MESHKOV, Commissar of the 1st Moscow Guards Motorised Infantry Division, whose tanks put up a fine performance in Moscow's defence during the period of the German advance. This picture was actually taken at the fighting front

A WOMAN STRETCHER-BEARER OF THE RED ARMY : Klavdia Orlova rendering first aid to a wounded soldier. She has already carried 43 Red Army men (with their arms) from the field of action

The World of Books—By Vernon Fane

H. G. WELLS ATTACKS COMPLACENT MEDIOCRITY

Kipps, Polly, Lewisham and Tewler—Mr. Wells on the Warpath; Two Good Women Novelists; An American Looks at Germany at War

"WHAT *are* ideers?" said Mr. Edward Albert Tewler. "What *good* are they? What *good* do they do you?"

How typical a sample of this "Sample of Life, 1901-1951" is this Mr. Tewler. After all, he did win the George Cross in an Incident, from which the community at large might adjudge that he emerged with credit. Mr. Tewler, you see, had character—"and you cannot have much character left if you've muddled yourself up with ideers."

In the title of his new novel, YOU CANNOT BE TOO CAREFUL (Secker and Warburg. 9s.), Mr. H. G. Wells underlines the direction of his frontal attack upon the Tewlers of this world. Not only do they suspect indeers, but they also suspect the people who have them, and it is in the nature of the human animal that what it does not understand it fears, and what it fears it seeks to destroy. Not that Mr. Tewler and his like are in the habit of taking a positive line in this direction. Rather, they tend to play safe; to invoke what is known as "common sense"; to indulge in the apotheosis of mediocrity—in other words, "you cannot be too careful."

Here is Mr. Wells hitting back at all those who have reproached him for using, or misusing, the novel form in order to put over certain sociological and semi-scientific theories of his own. It is as if he has become impatient with the continual harking back to Messrs. Kipps, Polly and Lewisham. If what we want are character, action and plot in the classic doses, here they are in the full measure of his ability to give them to us. And when Mr. Wells decides to tell a story and to make his characters think, act and behave in the way in which we agree they would think, act and behave, with no Wellsian asides or dissertations, he can give such a demonstration of mastery and technique as should make some of the lesser lights sit up and wonder how they themselves have never learned to do it.

Edward Albert Tewler is presented to us as a typical product of our civilisation. It is he who has made possible the succession of "safe" Prime Ministers, leading solid Governments, who have paved the way for the sorry mess we are in to-day. It is no use blinking the fact that the Tewlers of this country not only exist, but exist in enough numbers to have swung upon us the kind of Governments we have deserved. Someone has said that this portrait is "terrifyingly true." Of one thing we may be certain, and that is that its terrifying quality would not be apparent either to our Tewler or our Blimps.

For the rest it is enough to say that in this novel the indignant old master is at his best; for, in a piece of balanced fiction of this kind, he can employ his gifts for characterisation, atmosphere and humour to their best advantage.

In these days an Irish novel whose action is set during "the troubles" can almost be said to be a period piece. Nor is the period calculated to excite much interest or even patience in readers who are occupied with more potent forms of trouble. That the wrapper of Miss M. J. Farrell's TWO DAYS IN ARAGON (Collins. 8s.) depicts a hunting scene, and that the wrapper description insists that the Aragon of the title is a country house, and the chief character in the story, adds neither to our anticipation nor to our excitement.

It would be a pity, however, if a reader allowed himself to be put off by these things. For, while it is true that there is a good deal of descriptive "atmosphere" which is peculiarly Irish, and while the characters are, in fact, so much in period as to be out of the focus of to-day's realities, it is nevertheless a story which has its basis in the fundamentals of human conduct.

Certainly Miss Farrell dwells lovingly upon the character and setting of the old house itself, and it is also true that she demonstrates its power and pull over the people who live in it, and over their connections and dependants. But this is not all the story, nor yet the half of it.

I should prefer to say that Nan Foley is the dominating character, if not the heroine, of this novel. The action covers two days only, but in the course of it there emerges the forceful personality of this middle-aged woman, whose life and whose entire being were bound up with the family whom she had served, made alliance with and dominated for more than a generation.

The feckless, but not entirely futile Mrs. Fox, whose rule at Aragon was conditioned by a helplessness which not only aided, but abetted, the despotism exercised by Nan, is an excellent study of a type with which we have become familiarised through the masters of French fiction. Her two daughters, Sylvia and Grania, are well poised in the action, and beautifully balanced to the point when tragedy must overtake the house, but perhaps not destroy the family. Foley O'Neill, the horse-dealer from the mountain farm, and the son of the indomitable Nan, is also skilfully counterpoised. The attendant chorus of arson-seeking gunmen, and officers of the local British garrison, are also deftly woven into the plot.

This is a very good novel indeed, rich in observation, vivacious in dialogue, vigorous in detail and completely right in form and technique. The highly macabre portrait of Aunt Pigeon is an excellent study, and it required courage and conviction to visit just the right form of retribution upon her persecutor.

TWO WORLD-FAMED BOOKS OF REFERENCE, which are more indispensable than ever to-day

"WHO'S WHO": Contained within the familiar red covers of this interesting book are about 40,000 biographies of both men and women whose inclusion in this work is based on merit alone. The lives of people who have achieved distinction in public life, in business, on the battlefield or at sea are all included and make extraordinarily interesting reading. Every single one of these condensed biographies is checked and brought up to date for the current year, and new titles, decorations and degrees are included where these have been awarded. In this 1942 edition, about 1,000 new biographies have been added and a similar number of names removed on account of death. This volume is published by A. and C. Black and is priced at £3 10s.

"THE STATESMAN'S YEAR-BOOK": The edition illustrated above is the seventy-eighth annual publication of this statistical and historical annual of the States of the world. The set-backs attending the compilation of a work of this sort in wartime must be enormous, yet the Editor, Mr. M. Epstein, M.A., Ph.D., seems to have overcome most of them. Some idea of the difficulties with which he was faced can be gained from the Preface of the book. Notwithstanding all this, the *Year-book* attempts to reflect the prevailing political and economic conditions throughout the world. It is one of the most indispensable of all works of general reference; it is published by the firm of Macmillan at the very reasonable price of 20s.

London in wartime, and during the period of the air raids, is the setting of Miss Noel Streatfeild's new novel, I ORDERED A TABLE FOR SIX (Collins. 7s. 6d.). Mrs. Framley gives a supper party to five people, none of whom have any particular connection with each other, except that they were invited to this party. The story itself concerns, in fact, the lives of seven people. A bomb falls on the party: three of them get killed and two are injured.

"The book was suggested to me," writes the author, "by the fact that over and over again I have noticed in this war that it never seems to be the people who would be thankful to go who are killed by bombs." There are, of course, the kind of people whom we would be more thankful to see go than others by the same process. But Miss Streatfeild does not enlarge upon that human aspect.

The technique, of course, is that of *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*. The characters are brought together by a fortuitous circumstance, and are traced to the seating arrangements of the supper party by the threads of their own lives.

To be successful, this technique demands more than an ordinary gift for characterisation. It also requires some ability to balance character and atmosphere. In this Miss Streatfeild is completely successful, and by the time the inevitable bomb drops we are well acquainted with them all, and have no doubt in our own minds which of them could and should be spared.

In some of the vivacious conversational exchanges Miss Streatfeild demonstrates a pretty wit, but she seldom departs from the serious philosophical intention behind it all. *I Ordered a Table for Six* is certainly one of the best of the war novels so far.

We leave fiction to turn to yet another book on Germany from the inside. PATTERN OF CONQUEST (Heinemann. 8s. 6d.) is by Mr. Joseph C. Harsch, who was the Berlin correspondent of the *Christian Science Monitor* and one of the last American journalists to leave Germany.

This book is valuable because of the author's almost dispassionate detachment. He writes with obvious authority; he states his facts carefully, and is at all times frank and almost brutally frank on the subject of wishful thinking. If anybody is looking for soothing syrup and a number of pointers to the inevitable collapse of Germany from the inside, they will not find it here. They may, however, take comfort in Mr. Harsch's ultimate conclusion that Germany *can* be beaten, but they will have to take with it the unequivocal statement that before this can happen the democracies have some lessons to learn.

Mr. Harsch points out that Hitler promised to his people a relatively painless war. He thought that he could achieve his object by the most careful and thorough preparation, and to bring about his victories in such a manner as to spare the German nation any real impact of war upon themselves. Significantly, Mr. Harsch points out that it was the R.A.F.'s raid on Berlin on August 26, 1940, which brought the first realisation to the Germans that the war might turn out to be painful. Hitherto Hitler had had it all his own way, and that Britain could hit back came as "a shattering, mental shock." "It was then that the myth of German invincibility received its first shock."

Mr. Harsch is of the opinion that the Germans will only be defeated when their military power is crushed, and that no amount of propaganda will do the trick without that. He left Germany before the Russian Army began its victorious offensive, and we may take note of his conclusion "that the German Army can be beaten, and that the whole Nazi structure can disintegrate with a speed and completeness which would equal that of the French collapse in 1940."

WASTE PAPER IS A MUNITION OF WAR

MISS JEAN COLIN BRAVES THE COLD TO HELP IN THE PAPER-SALVAGE CAMPAIGN: Miss Colin is Principal Boy in *Jack and the Beanstalk*, at the London Coliseum. She has sent out invitations to children to bring sacks of waste paper to the theatre. And the children have responded in grand style: each of them has received a ticket for a tea entertainment in exchange!

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From all Chemists

IN QUEST OF GOOD HOTELS

ADVICE BY ASHLEY COURTENAY

Letters, accompanied by a stamped, addressed envelope for reply, should be addressed to him c/o The Editor, THE SPHERE, Commonwealth House, 1, New Oxford Street, London, W.C.1.

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Traditional superiority. Combines all the factors that one expects to find in a first-class hotel, Restaurant, grill room, men's bar, Richmonde Lounge—the social rendezvous of Bournemouth —with Marcel Torrent and his orchestra. Apartments each with P.O. telephone and most with private bathroom. Tel. 7272 every room. *Resident Directors:* Mr. and Mrs. F. J. McInnes.

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17 miles south of Tunbridge Wells, is a peaceful spot. Homeliness plus the service of a good hotel is the keynote. Central heating, abundance of hot water, four good meals a day make the terms from 4 gns. week particularly reasonable. Tel.: Horeham Rd., 76.

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FOR OVER half-a-century medical men have recommended the regular use of Kutnow's Powder in cases of rheumatism, lumbago, gout, neuritis, sciatica, etc.

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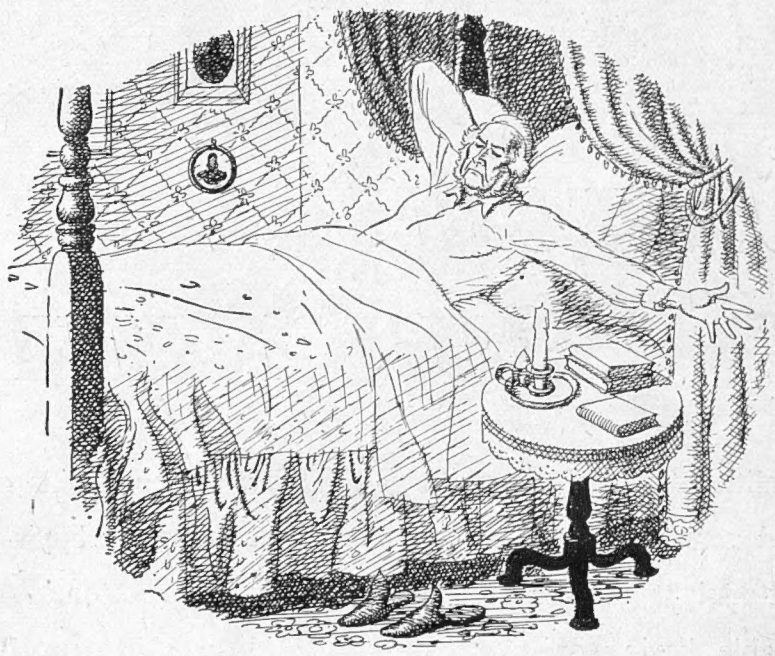

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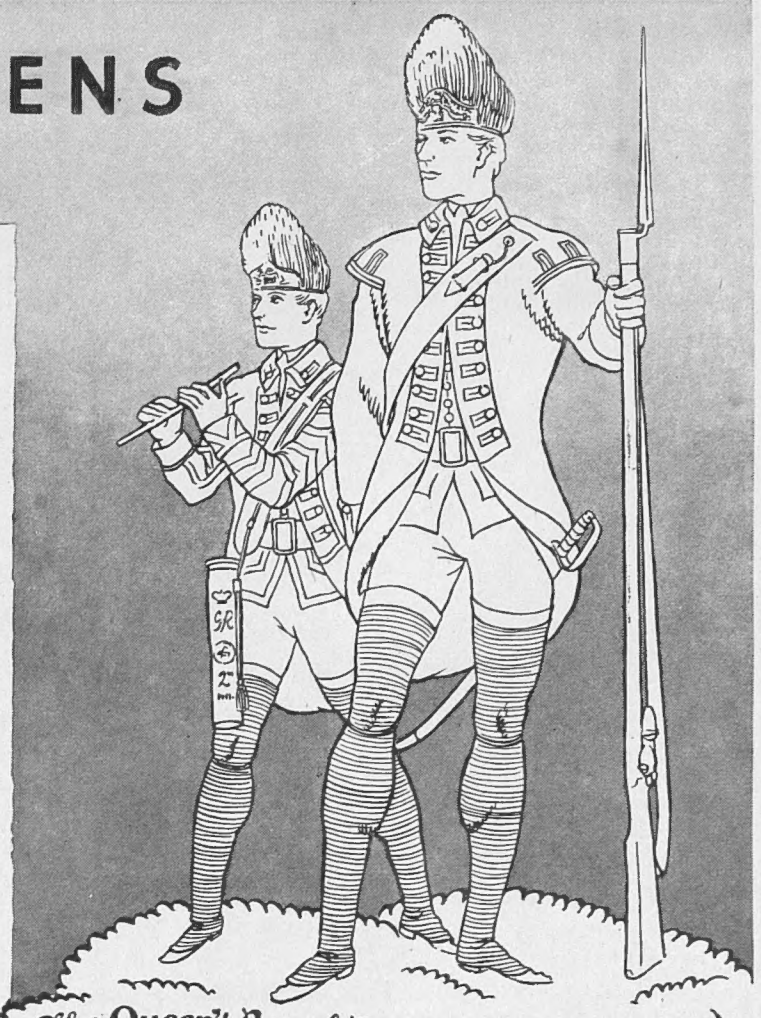

The Queen's Royal Regiment (WEST SURREY)

Raised in 1661, it was originally called the Tangier Regiment or First Tangerines. It became the Queen Dowager's Regiment after the death of Charles II; the Queen's Own Regiment in 1727; Queen's (second) Royal Regiment of Foot in 1751; and the Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey), in 1881.

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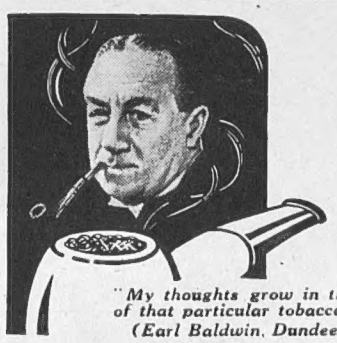

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Few tobaccos could inspire such praise in a public speech, yet all the cool sweetness and pleasure of this slow-burning tobacco may fill YOUR pipe at a cost of only 1/9 per oz. in Britain. Sold only sealed, in packets and tins.

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